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Issue 1096
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RS1096 "All the News That Fits"



LIZ GOES GAGA
Lady Gaga and Queen Elizabeth II, after Gaga's December 7th set at a benefit.

When the Lady Met the Queen

THE PERFECT OUTFIT TO WEAR WHEN MEETING QUEEN Elizabeth II? A red-latex dress modeled after Queen Elizabeth I, of course. Always the practical dresser, Lady Gaga threw on a puffy-sleeved gown with a 20-foot train to hit the Opera House in Blackpool, England, last month for the annual Royal Variety Performance. (The benefit supports elderly British

artists.) After Gaga closed the show with her new tune "Speechless" – which she performed at a piano hoisted 15 feet in the air – Queen Elizabeth II said hello to the pop star. Gaga wouldn't reveal what the pair discussed – "That is private," she said – but she spoke to the British tabloids about the queen beforehand. "I'm a massive fan," she said. "I've been practicing my curtsy."

COVER STORY

Planet Earth 911

Behind Big Oil and Big Coal's lobbying campaign to block progress on global warming.

PLUS: 17 polluters and deniers who are derailing efforts to curb the climate catastrophe.

By Jeff Goodell and Tim Dickinson 30

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The Psychedelic King of L.A.

The trippy wisdom and supremely strange sounds of Devendra Banhart, high priest of Los Angeles' new bohemian nation.

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Melissa Etheridge

Malibu and Bruce Springsteen inspire rocker's new album **20**

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Justin Bieber

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rollingstone.com

The Stooges



Rock and Roll Hall of Fame: Meet the Class of 2010

On March 15th, the Stooges, Genesis, Abba, the Hollies and Jimmy Cliff will be inducted into the Hall of Fame. **ROLLING STONE** retraces each act's remarkable career through photo galleries and interviews. **PLUS:** Essential coverage of 25 years of the Hall, including videos of the most memorable performances and reporting from the anniversary bash in New York. rollingstone.com/rockhall

VIDEO INTERVIEW

Listening Tips From Vampire Weekend

Rostam Batmanglij and Chris Baio visit the RS offices and tell you how to listen to their new album, *Contra*: while "shaving, showering and anything that keeps you fresh." rollingstone.com/issue1096

VIDEO

At Home With Devendra Banhart

The folk rocker explains the trippy dual meaning of his album title *What Will We Be* and why the single "16th and Valencia Roxy Music" will make you want to chicken-dance. rollingstone.com/issue1096

BEHIND THE SCENES



Bieber on the Beach

On the set with Justin Bieber in the Bahamas as he films a music video for "Baby," a new tune from his upcoming album. rollingstone.com/issue1096



Kris Allen, Allison Iraheta and Adam Lambert

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

The Return of 'American Idol'

Check out our live blog of the January 12th premiere of Season Nine, and full coverage of every single episode after that.

PLUS: A final farewell to ex-judge Paula Abdul. RS experts and *Idol* alumni look back at Abdul's best, worst and weirdest moments through the years. rollingstone.com/americanidol

VIDEOS

Dashboard Confessional Live

Chris Carrabba and John Lefler hit our studio to perform cuts from their latest disc, *Alter the Ending*. rollingstone.com/videos

Tab the Band at RS

Boston-area rockers Tony and Adrian Perry - Joe's sons - play tunes from their new album, *Zoo Noises*. rollingstone.com/videos

Breaking: Girls

The tale of a California punk band with a chilling history and a beautiful sound. rollingstone.com/breaking

BLOGS

Album Preview: Hot Chip

The dance rockers talk about their upcoming LP, *One Life Stand*, and new dad Alexis Taylor tells how fatherhood has affected his songwriting. rollingstone.com/issue1096

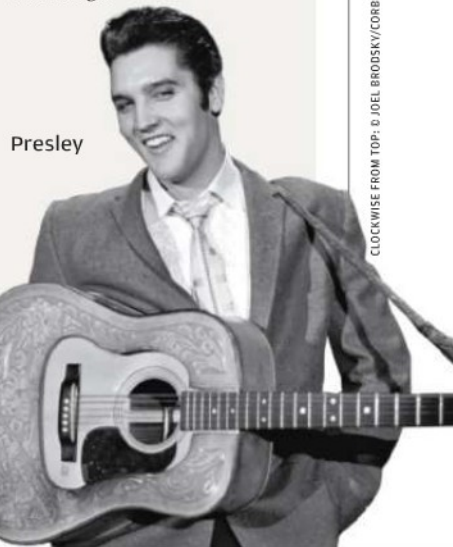
Thirty Seconds to Mars Wage 'War'

For their latest album, *This Is War*, Jared Leto and his band invited hundreds of fans into the studio. "It was ferocious," he says. rollingstone.com/issue1096

PHOTOS

Young Elvis Presley

Exclusive shots of the King at 21, from the Grammy Museum's new show. rollingstone.com/issue1096



Presley



FOR A **BETTER-LOOKING TOMORROW.**

Even Olympic Speed Skater

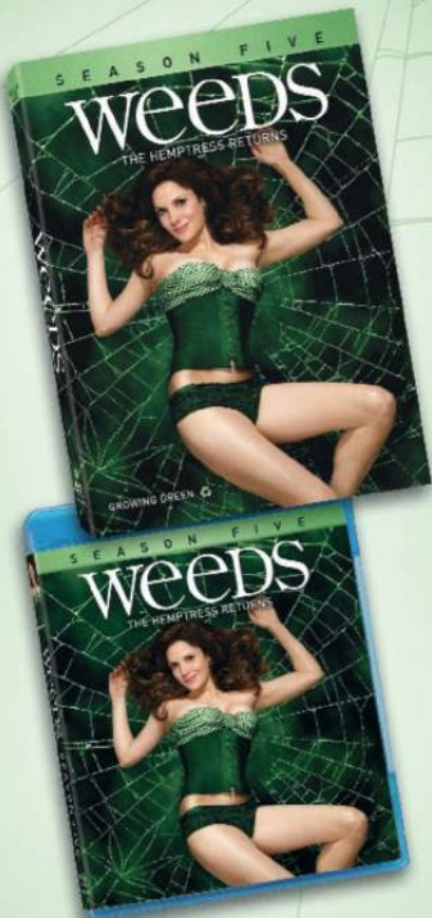
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Correspondence

{ Love Letters & Advice }



Sexy Beast

I WAS GLAD TO READ THAT Taylor Lautner didn't try to legitimize Neil Strauss' "You don't drink, you don't smoke, what do you do?" line of questioning ["Taylor Lautner's Wild Ride," RS 1093]. Like the other Taylor he's rumored to be dating, Lautner comes across as sincere in an entertainment world that's too often full of plastic personas.

*Jennifer Montgomery
Roanoke, VA*

TAYLOR - OH, MY. WHAT perfectly lovely pictures.

Ivy Pierson, Holden, LA

I GUESS ALL YOU HAVE to do now is have great abs and star in one of the worst movies of the year. Who's next, Optimus Prime?

Tom Torrillo, Stamford, CT

GAYEST. COVER. EVER.

*Lance Middleton
Mesquite, TX*

KUDOS TO LAUTNER and his spot-on turn in *New Moon*. Young actors should take their cues from him: It's possible to be in the spotlight with self-respect.

*Jenn Putt
Fort Wayne, IN*

THANKS FOR THE DELICIOUS Lautner pictures. I'm the 25-year-old cougar to his 17-year-old werewolf.

Laura Hanson, Denver

CAN YOU GO BACK IN TIME and not print the most disturbing RS cover ever?

Joseph Esposito, New York

TAYLOR SEEMS LIKE A good kid - but this cover makes him a man.

Diana Jerdan, Philadelphia

Bait and Switch

MATT TAIBBI HAS ONCE again knocked it out of the park ["Obama's Big Sell-out," RS 1093]. I campaigned for Obama and am now appalled at what he has done (or not done) his first year in office, so Taibbi speaks for me. It's infuriating to find out that the man who appeared to be our best hope for financial reform is actually in bed with Wall Street.

Joshua Pringle, New York

WHAT WOULD WE DO without Taibbi? He is one of the few journalists with the balls to tell us what is really happening.

Donna Valerie, San Diego

AFTER READING TAIBBI's frightening article on Obama's disappointing response to the financial crisis, I am depressed beyond words. Next I'm expecting you to inform me that the "S" on the chest of that strong guy with the red cape stands for "Shithead."

Nick Frese, Turnersville, NJ

Heartbreaker

YOUR ARTICLE ON TOM Petty was superb ["It's Good to Be King," RS 1093], but I would have much preferred to gaze at Petty's craggy, bemused face on the cover.

Leslie Greene, Westport, CT

EITHER TOM PETTY DIED and Sam Jones snuck into heaven and took this photo,

or else Petty has the coolest studio among us.

John Balgaard, Baldwin, WI

Surfer Savior

MANY THANKS FOR ALLISON Glock's great article on Jamie Tworkowski ["Surfer to Savior," RS 1093]. Not since Cameron Crowe has a writer captured the insecurities of the teen years with such a sympathetic heart. As for the teens in the story, my hope is that when their idealized image of Tworkowski begins to fade, they'll realize that the courage, strength and beauty they've projected onto him lies within themselves. Otherwise, they never would have recognized these traits in him.

Kevin Grange, Park City, UT

House of Blues

YOUR STORY "THE BLACK KEYS' Muscle Shoals Odyssey" is inaccurate [Rock & Roll, RS 1093]. You call Muscle Shoals a ghost town, and nothing could be further from the truth. The magic is still here. The music has never stopped. I don't know who gave the Black Keys such limited information, but the Shoals is the heart of the music industry, and we will continue to thrive.

*Tonya S. Holly
Cypress Moon Studios
Sheffield, AL*

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Editor's Notes

The Weathermen

THIS TIME LAST YEAR, WE WOULD not have imagined we'd be devoting substantial space in **ROLLING STONE** to a story about the imminent failure of climate-change legislation. "During the election, there was a feeling in Washington that a bipartisan consensus was forming," says contributing editor Jeff Goodell, who helped assemble our cover package in this issue. "Obama and McCain were both talking about it. Everyone just assumed Obama would push a bill through Congress limiting carbon emissions."

But it didn't take long for that spirit to sour. "Once Obama took office, there was immediate polarization on global warming," Goodell says. "And it was for completely cynical political reasons."

Goodell has been writing for RS since 1992. Originally, he focused mostly on Silicon Valley, where he grew up – he even worked briefly for Apple in the early Eighties. As he tracked the rise of the techno-boom from nerd subculture to America's dominant industry, Goodell began to wonder about the price we were paying for all that innovation. "Here I'd spent years celebrating the electron," he says. "But I never really thought about where those electrons came from – and the costs and consequences of how we generate electricity." Soon he was hooked on the issue. "This is the biggest story of our time," he says. "By comparison, it makes Silicon Valley seem a lot less important."

Goodell is just completing his second book on climate issues, *How to Cool the Planet: Geoengineering and the Audacious Quest to Fix Earth's Climate*, to be published in April by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. "Politically, we've hit a wall," he says. "But as I wrote the book, I discovered that technologically, we have a bigger tool kit than I'd thought. The action right now



Tim Dickinson (left) and Jeff Goodell. "The impediments to dealing with warming are political," says Goodell. "Not technological."

is with these scientists who are trying to come up with artificial ways to reduce global warming."

Goodell is cautiously optimistic that there are grand technological fixes in the offing. "They put optimism in the drinking water in Silicon Valley," he says. "The whole culture there is perpetually – and maybe stupidly – optimistic." Still, he adds, geoengineering isn't a substitute for deep cuts in carbon emissions. Nor is it without risks: "If you're hacking a computer and it crashes, you can reboot. But what happens if we're hacking the climate and it crashes? There's no tech support for that."

By some strange twist, the other contributing editor who co-wrote this issue's cover package also grew up in Silicon Valley, where his parents were both economists. Tim Dickinson, who has covered National Affairs for RS since 2003, profiles America's worst climate villains – leaders like Warren Buffett, Rupert Murdoch, John McCain and Dick Gephardt – who are blocking progress on global warming. "These are incredibly smart, powerful people," says Dickinson. "And they should know better."

—WILL DANA, Managing Editor

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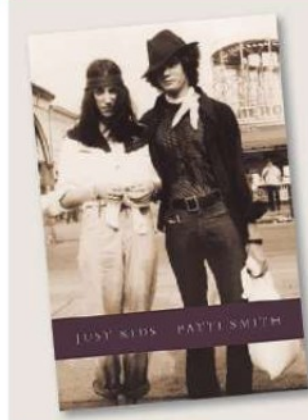
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The Summer of Love


The list of great rock memoirs just got longer with the release of Patti Smith's *Just Kids*, an elegiac recollection of her friendship with the artist Robert Mapplethorpe. In this issue's exclusive excerpt, the two restlessly creative young people roam the wonderland of New York in the late Sixties. "I promised my friend I would write our story," Smith says. "It began when we were 20. It was the summer of love. It is not a story of fame and fortune. It is the unfolding of life and art and our youthful struggles, and ultimately how I came to stand before him, jacket tossed over my shoulder, as he released the shutter and created the cover of *Horses*."

A full-page photograph of Demi Lovato performing on stage. She is wearing a black leather jacket over a teal shirt and black pants, with one leg raised. She holds a microphone in her right hand and has her left hand raised in a peace sign. The background is filled with fans reaching out their hands towards her, illuminated by bright stage lights.

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Survivor.



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M.I.A. IN THE STUDIO

New tracks include "I'm Down Like Your Internet Connection." **Page 14**

Q&A: JIMMY BUFFETT

On meeting Bob Marley and how an epic trip to Mali inspired his new LP. **Page 18**

MEET JUSTIN BIEBER

The 15-year-old R&B sensation is taking on Disney and the JoBros. **Page 22**

Rock & Roll

2009
YEAR IN
REVIEW



BESTSELLING
ARTIST

**Michael
Jackson**



TOP-SELLING
ALBUM

**Taylor
Swift**



BIGGEST
TOUR

U2



BIGGEST NEW
ARTIST

**Lady
Gaga**

Jackson, Beatles Save Biz – Almost

CD sales drop 19 percent this year as tours struggle, Spotify takes on Apple **By Steve Knopper**

IN A YEAR WHEN THE LAST MAJOR retailer – Virgin Megastore – shut down, CD sales sank another 19 percent and even the long-booming tour business started to slide, the music industry got a much-needed boost from a couple of its biggest-ever acts: Michael Jackson and the Beatles. After his June 25th death, the King of Pop sold 7 million albums, 10.2 million song downloads and 1.3 million DVDs, not to mention more than \$72 million in tickets for his movie, *This Is It*. The Beatles followed in September with the long-awaited release of their remastered catalog, selling 2 million records and more than 1 million copies of the accompanying *Rock Band* video game. But to many in the industry, even this was foreboding news. "The music these artists made has stood the test of time," says Jim Caparro, former chairman of Island Def Jam. "The bad thing is there aren't [new]

artists whose careers have transcended the changing habits of consumers."

Virgin, Circuit City Close; Big Boxes Back Off CDs

After a decade of declining U.S. CD sales (a drop of 45 percent from 2000 to 2008, according to Nielsen SoundScan), the last major music chain, Virgin Megastore, closed its final outlet in June, leaving Best Buy, Walmart and Target as the only places to buy CDs in many markets. But even those big-box stores lost some of their music-selling clout, as Circuit City closed early in the year, and Best Buy and Walmart slashed CD shelf space by as much as 20 percent during the previous two years. "Fewer and fewer stores exist, which puts pressure on us," Bob Anderson, senior vice president for the RCA/Jive Label Group, told *ROLLING STONE* early in 2009. "It's almost like the

stock market, where you're not really sure when it's going to bottom out."

Spotify, Amazon Challenge Apple's iTunes

For the first time since it launched in 2001, iTunes saw its market share slip this year, from 68.3 to 67.1 percent of the market, as Amazon's MP3 Store jumped from 6.2 to 9.1 percent, according to the NPD Group. That was just one sign that serious challenges to the nation's biggest music retailer grew this year: In Europe, streaming-audio service Spotify gave 6 million customers the ability to listen to any song they wanted for free, and in the U.S., MOG unveiled a \$5-a-month subscription service backed by all four major labels. Late in the year, though, Apple seemed to make a competitive move into the streaming business, purchasing Lala, which specializes in

2009 Top 10 Albums

1.
Taylor Swift
Fearless
Total Sales: 2,604,000

2.
Lady Gaga
The Fame
Total Sales: 1,823,000

3.
Susan Boyle
I Dreamed a Dream
Total Sales: 1,803,000

4.
Hannah Montana
Hannah Montana: The Movie Soundtrack
Total Sales: 1,740,000

5.
Black Eyed Peas
The E.N.D.
Total Sales: 1,554,000

6.
Eminem
Relapse
Total Sales: 1,551,000

7.
Andrea Bocelli
My Christmas
Total Sales: 1,516,000

8.
Jay-Z
The Black Album 3
Total Sales: 1,393,000

9.
Kings of Leon
Only by the Night
Total Sales: 1,276,000

10.
Nickelback
Dark Horse
Total Sales: 1,223,000

Estimated by ROLLING STONE
from Nielsen SoundScan data

The Verdict: 2009's Hits and Misses

Gaga broke through, and Kings of Leon went to Number One, but Creed reunited – and few cared. A look back

THE HITS



Lady Gaga

Five Top 10 singles, the year's Number Two record – and 2010 looks to be just as big for her.

Kings of Leon

The year's rock success story, with a Number One album and their first arena tour.

Black Eyed Peas

Between their two hit singles, BEP held down the Number One spot for a third of 2009.

Zac Brown

Hard-touring, Buffett-worshipping singer appealed to jam-band kids and country fans alike.

Taylor Swift

Her second huge year in a row. She was everywhere – magazine covers, SNL twice.

THE MISSES



Creed

Their catalog has sold 27 million copies, but Creed's reunion tour and new LP both tanked.

Mariah Carey

2005's *Emancipation of Mimi* sold 5 million; her latest moved only 354,000.

Shakira

A Weezy cameo and an SNL spot didn't help Shakira; her LP fell out of the Top 40 in three weeks.

Adam Lambert

Despite the hype, Lambert disappointed: His lead single stalled at Number 61.

50 Cent

Even with verses from Eminem and beats by Dr. Dre, 50's CD sold just 279,000 in a month.

2009 Top 10 Tours

1.
U2
Total Gross: \$311,637,730
Number of Shows: 44

2.
Madonna
Total Gross: \$222,017,248
Number of Shows: 46

3.
Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band
Total Gross: \$156,340,910
Number of Shows: 72

4.
AC/DC
Total Gross: \$135,287,350
Number of Shows: 76

5.
Pink
Total Gross: \$102,878,271
Number of Shows: 131

6.
Britney Spears
Total Gross: \$94,813,948
Number of Shows: 70

7.
Billy Joel and Elton John
Total Gross: \$90,218,314
Number of Shows: 32

8.
Tina Turner
Total Gross: \$86,372,137
Number of Shows: 59

9.
Coldplay
Total Gross: \$84,369,360
Number of Shows: 66

10.
Metallica
Total Gross: \$76,613,910
Number of Shows: 66

Courtesy of Billboard Boxscore

streaming music, for a reported \$85 million. "There's no question that five years from now, our primary way of listening will be in streams of some sort," says former Yahoo! Music general manager Ian Rogers, who provides digital-music strategies for artists including Beck and Eminem. "As soon as my iPod can play streams, I don't have a use for a download anymore."

2009's New Stars: Gaga, Zac Brown, Susan Boyle

The year's biggest breakthrough belonged to Lady Gaga, who moved 20 million downloads and 1.8 million copies of her debut, *The Fame*. "Like what Michael Jackson and Madonna did for MTV, she's doing for this Twitter-YouTube world," says Jimmy Iovine, head of her label, Interscope. "It's very similar to the transition from radio to video – where artists grow up in the medium." Another Internet Age artist, Taylor Swift, had her second huge year in a row, moving 3.2 million albums in 2009.

And the Zac Brown Band broke into the mainstream the old-fashioned way, playing nearly 300 shows and selling 1.1 million records. "The reality is, there's no magic pill," says Brown's co-manager Bernie Cahill. "He really was touring his ass off." In December, *Britain's Got Talent* runner-up Susan Boyle set the year's first-week sales record, with 701,000 copies of *I Dreamed a Dream*. "Older consumers are the ones that still buy records," says a major-label source. "The flip side of that is they buy one record a year, and the one they buy is usually around Christmas."

Recession, Overtouring End Concert-Biz Boom

The concert industry, which grew all decade, finally started to dip in 2009 – North American attendance dropped 1.7 percent, and revenues dropped two percent, according to Billboard Boxscore. Promoters blamed the recession – the biggest promoter, Live Nation, responded by slashing prices

(tickets for acts ranging from Rod Stewart to No Doubt went for as low as \$10). Overtouring – in order to make up for lost CD revenue – also hurt many acts. In an attempt to lure fans back to shows, top touring bands from Steely Dan to Aerosmith played classic albums straight through.

The biggest players in the business claimed to have a solution to the problems: Ticketmaster's CEO, Irving Azoff, proposed a \$2.5 billion merger with rival Live Nation, which Azoff said would lower ticket prices and service charges. "The ability to fill more seats, more sponsorship dollars," Azoff said, "all these things should result in lower ticket prices." The merger (which is still pending approval from the U.S. Justice Department) faced opposition from competing promoters, artists including Bruce Springsteen and members of Congress. "You're bringing together two near or total monopolies into a supermonopoly," says Tony Margherita, Wilco's manager. "That business model may be really great for Live Nation and Ticketmaster. It doesn't really work for us."



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Jeff Beck, Clapton to Rock Arenas

Beck on the guitar gods' 2010 tour and reuniting with Rod Stewart
By Andy Greene

AFTER A PAIR OF SUCCESSFUL gigs in Japan last year, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck are bringing their dueling-guitars show on the road: The duo are launching a co-headlining tour, starting February 13th in London. Each will play his own set be-

CHECKING IN

fore sharing the stage for an extended encore. Calling from his home in England, Beck is in the middle of scouring his vinyl collection looking for rare tracks to revive with Clapton.

Which records have you been checking out?

Right now, Little Walter and Robert Johnson, looking for anything I might have missed, not that Eric missed much with Cream. But there might be a riff there waiting for us.

You replaced Clapton in the Yardbirds - will you play any of those songs together?

Mention the word Yardbirds to Eric and he'll turn purple. I don't know why. They didn't serve him badly, and they certainly didn't serve me badly.

Are you and Eric close?

There is a respect there, but we aren't bosom buddies or



BECK IS BACK
Beck and Clapton will kick off their tour on February 13th.

anything. I'm probably speaking out of turn, but we both have been striving for the same thing: to be recognized as guitarists. He's recognized; I'm not [laughs].

You have only six shows booked. Will you do more?

If Eric is up for it. He is a difficult character, and I'm difficult. But last time we played together, he seemed to be a lot warmer and a lot more content with his life in general.

Rod Stewart joined you for two songs at an L.A. gig in April. How did that go?

I couldn't believe he showed up. He rang me the next day and said, "What about an album?" And I said, "Yeah, right." I am mildly interested, but it would have to be a genuine effort - not a weekend blues album.

He came close to a Faces reunion last year, but then he backed out.

I don't blame him. Let the memory carry. Rod's voice is different now. Roger Daltrey's voice isn't the same. Same for Robert Plant. If you can't hit the notes, then it's time to think about another form of music. **PS**

M.I.A. Gets 'More Musical' on Her 'Kala' Follow-Up

The MC checks in from the studio about new disc, due in the summer
By Brian Hiatt

FOR HER LAST ALBUM, 2007's *Kala*, M.I.A. wandered the world, recording with Indian street drummers - but for her third album, due in the summer, she's staying put in a Los Angeles studio. The 34-year-old artist, who got engaged and had a baby boy in the past few years, promises her most personal music. "I'm definitely more musical now than I was, and more honest now than

I was," she says. "The idea is just to be as human as possible."

M.I.A.'s primary producer this time is Baltimore's Blaqstarr - who worked on *Kala* tracks, including the pulsing "World Town" - with "Paper Planes" collaborators Diplo and Switch. Diplo describes the sessions as "laborious": "People expect a lot from her." Adds Blaqstarr, "I don't want this album to sound like anything heard before. It's gonna be a first of its kind - a 'post' experience, after everything else."

Songs include "I Fight the Ones That Fight Me," which



M.I.A. describes as "dance-y and kind of weird," and "I'm Down Like Your Internet Connection." The song's chorus came together while M.I.A. was on the phone with her ISP's customer-service department: "I basically got Filipino Verizon workers to sing the hook to my Internet song." **PS**

HOT LIST



BROKEN BELLS

"The High Road"

We're calling it now: 2010 is going to rule! That prediction is based entirely on the wistful space-pop gorgeousness of the first single from Broken Bells, a.k.a. Danger Mouse and the Shins' James Mercer. (Rejected names: Snooki and the Situations, Gnarlus Dorkly, Mr. Precious.)

ALICIA KEYS

"This Bed"

Paging Wendy, Lisa and Sheila: The only way this Eighties-style dance cut could sound more like Prince is if it was wearing suede elevator shoes and assless purple pants.

HOT CHIP

"Take It In"

When the celestial chorus of this Pet Shop Boys-like anthem kicks in, it feels like swimming in a warm pool of lobster bisque while getting a shoulder rub from Jesus. In other words: like, pretty good.

NEON INDIAN

Psychic Chasms LP

The kids call this goofy, sleepily seductive synth-pop "glo-fi" - we call it Buggles-y as fuck. It's like your old-school Nintendo ran off to start a band with that robot bro from *Short Circuit*.

SADE

"Soldier of Love"

The smoothest woman to ever live returns with more epic babymaking music - but, really, you can make anything you want to it: cookies, an Ikea TV stand, model airplanes. BTW, the real sweetest taboo? Poco!

YOU



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Hall of Fame's Class of '10

On March 15th in New York, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame will induct an eclectic group, from punk godfathers to Europop hitmakers **By Andy Greene**



INVISIBLE TOUCH
Gabriel and Collins
(from left) in 1975

Genesis

From 1968 to 1975, the Peter Gabriel-fronted group created theatrical art rock; Phil Collins took over in 1976 and turned Genesis into pop hitmakers.

Current Status

After a 15-year hiatus, Collins returned for a tour in 2007, but recent neck surgery left him unable to play the drums. Gabriel called a meeting in 2004 to discuss his possible return, but he later changed his mind.

They Say

"I don't know if we'll perform," says keyboardist Tony Banks. "I don't think Phil is itching to play early-1970s Genesis. And Peter is pretty elusive; he's a busy man. For now, we've just kept the date free."



Abba

The Swedish pop act created some of the most enduring hits of the Seventies. Abba split in 1982, but the music lives on with the hit musical *Mamma Mia!*

Current Status

Benny Andersson is the only member still playing music, and the band has turned down many requests to re-form - including a reported billion-dollar offer. "We never even contemplated negotiating," says Andersson.

They Say

"I didn't think this would happen, because we were a pop band," says Andersson. "I'd say the odds of us re-forming to perform there are 99-to-1."



The Stooges

Led by Iggy Pop, the Michigan proto-punkers never had a hit, but their three albums influenced everyone from David Bowie to the White Stripes.

Current Status

They reunited in 2003 and have been touring ever since. Guitarist Ron Asheton died in 2009 - they are carrying on with Raw Power-era ax man James Williamson for a 2010 tour.

They Say

"When they told me, I had strong emotions for two hours," says Iggy. "But after that, I scratched my head and thought, 'Am I still cool, or is it over now?'"



Jimmy Cliff

Before Bob Marley broke, Jimmy Cliff introduced America to reggae with the hit soundtrack to the classic 1972 film *The Harder They Come*.

Current Status

Cliff is working on a new album, planning his first U.S. tour in five years and writing a sequel to *The Harder They Come*.

They Say

"It's always nice to step to the winner's podium," says Cliff. "When you win a reggae Grammy, it doesn't have the same meaning in the United States or internationally as this. This is a big deal."



The Hollies

Best known in America for their 1960s singles "Bus Stop" and "Carrie Anne," this British Invasion pop band was huge in the U.K., where it continued scoring hits into the 1970s.

Current Status

Guitarist Graham Nash quit in '68 to form Crosby, Stills and Nash, and lead singer Allan Clarke retired in '99, but the Hollies still tour.

They Say

"I always thought we deserved it," says Nash. "I certainly hope to perform together at the ceremony. I've been in contact with everybody. We're trying to work it out right now."

IN THE NEWS

Lilith Fair Set to Return in 2010

Lilith Fair, the all-women touring festival that ran from 1997 to 1999, is hitting the comeback trail. "We've been living in a mood of fear for most of the last eight years, so it wasn't a great time for Lilith," says fest co-founder Terry McBride. "But with the political shift, the timing just felt right." The new version will feature some of the original Lilith co-headliners - **Sheryl Crow**, **Indigo Girls**, **Sarah McLachlan** - for an updated version of the tour that will hit amphitheaters in the summer (dates have not been announced). As in the past, each Lilith Fair stop will feature multiple stages and acts - among them **Mary J. Blige**, **Erykah Badu**, **Tegan and Sara**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Miranda Lambert** and **Colbie Caillat**. "I was thrilled," says Crow. "This is what the original Lilith tour was trying to be, but you didn't have as big a cross-section of music."

John Frusciante Quits RHCP

Guitarist **John Frusciante** has quit the **Red Hot Chili Peppers**. "To put it simply, my musical interests have led me in a different direction," he wrote on his website. "I have changed, as a person and artist, to such a degree that to do further work... with the band would... go against my own nature." Frusciante first quit the band in 1992 but rejoined six years later. The Chili Peppers are rumored to have replaced Frusciante with **Josh Klinghoffer**, who toured with them in 2007.

IN BRIEF

■ Reggae singer **Buju Banton** was arrested in Florida on December 10th while allegedly trying to purchase more than five kilograms of cocaine, according to the DEA. The singer was charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute. Banton denies the charges.

■ In mid-December, **Lil Wayne's** rock-influenced LP, *Rebirth*, leaked six weeks before its scheduled release when Amazon accidentally shipped 500 copies. In other Wayne news, the rapper will put out another new record, *Tha Carter IV*, in February, around the time his jail term for a gun charge begins.

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AS HELL..."**
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TO RESIST."**
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Jimmy Buffett's African Adventure Inspires New LP

On surfing in a hurricane, meeting Marley, and his epic trip to Mali

By Austin Scaggs

JIMMY BUFFETT'S 28TH studio album, *Buffet Hotel*, was inspired by an epic 2008 trip to Mali's Festival in the Desert, the annual gathering of nomadic Tuareg musicians in the Sahara, near Timbuktu. Traveling with Island Records founder

Q&A

Chris Blackwell and MTV co-founder Tom Freston, Buffett was creatively energized by the music he heard there – and by 36 hours of partying and jamming in Mali's capital, Bamako. "This is not an African record," he says. "But as a writer, I was not going to get dropped into a pot like that and not come out with something."

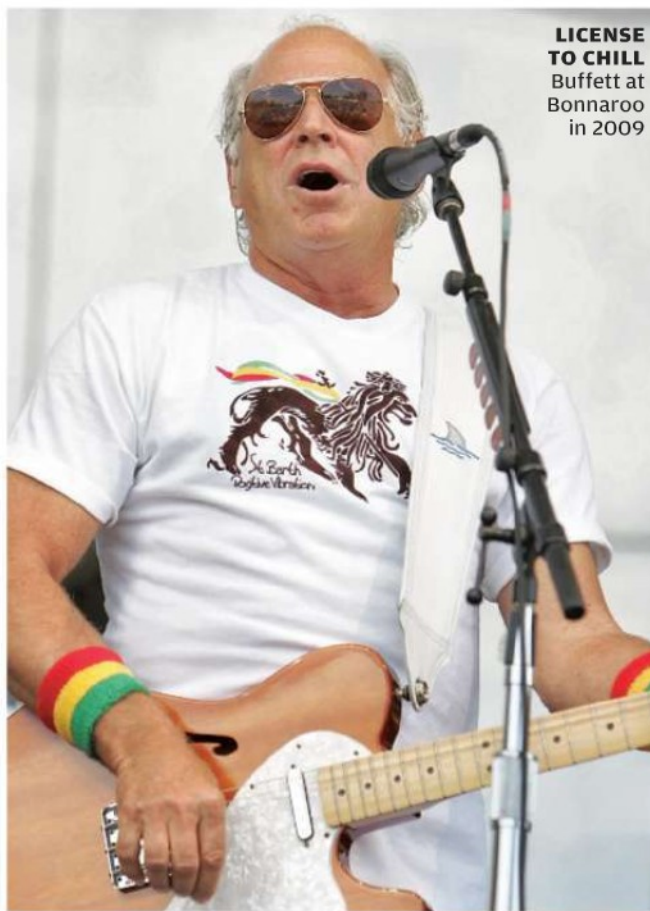
Naming the album "Buffet Hotel" will only perpetuate the misspelling of your last name.

Absolutely – and I like it! I've received royalty checks with the wrong name on it, and Universal has misspelled it on the album cover. In the early days, people would come up to me and go, "Where's the food?"

The Buffet Hotel is a major musical landmark in Mali. It's where this legendary African group called the Super Rail Band got their start. It's like a club you'd find on Beale Street [in Memphis], but it's actually a train station. The musicians worked for the railroad during the day and played at night. When you go to a show there, there are people in Muslim West African dress and guys in sharkskin suits.

There's a song on the album called "Surfing in a Hurricane" – have you actually done that?

Absolutely. If you don't live in Hawaii or California or Montauk, you have to wait for a hurricane to get good waves. Growing up in Alabama, that



LICENSE TO CHILL
Buffett at Bonnaroo in 2009

"I feel like Bob Marley and I touch a similar nerve in people, musically."

was the only way to get surf. You know those surfing idiots you see on the news when the hurricanes come? I was one of those.

Who are your favorite young bands?

I love what the Kings of Leon do. They're the real deal, and they haven't even hit their peak yet. And Zac Brown: He reminds me of me. He'll be a big act.

What was it like traveling in Africa with Chris Blackwell, who introduced Bob Marley to the world?

He's so unassuming and cool, but people know who he is and what he's done for the music world, particularly in Africa. People would come up to him, almost like religious encounters, and thank him for Bob.

Did you ever meet Marley?

A couple of times, but we never hung out. I met him once on a jogging path in Coconut Grove, and I saw him watching the Larry Holmes-Muhammad Ali fight at the Garden in 1980.

Did you recognize his genius then?

I knew it. We were never close, but I felt we were touching a similar nerve in people, musically. The first time I went to St. Barths, I went to a bar called Le Select, and on the wall there were two posters next to each other – one for Marley's *Catch a Fire*, and the other was of my album *Son of a Son of a Sailor* [1978]. They're still up there, behind Plexiglas now. I don't win many awards, and I don't care, but I take a lot of pride in that spot on the wall.

IN THE NEWS

Eagles, Fleetwood Mac Prep Tour

Two giants of Seventies rock – the **Eagles** and **Fleetwood Mac** – are planning a joint tour for next summer. The outing will hit stadiums and arenas, and will include multnight stands in some markets. "Any time you have two stars on a package, it becomes a bigger evening," says Billy Joel's booking agent Dennis Arfa of Artist Group International. "The problem is that when you go into stadiums, it's harder to sell to the baby-boomer audience." Both groups have toured extensively in recent years; Fleetwood Mac hit the road in 2009, without a new album to support, and grossed \$63 million over 59 shows. Touring behind 2007's *Long Road Out of Eden*, the Eagles grossed \$57 million over 50 nights in 2008.

Labels Launch Music-Video Hub

Three of the four major labels – Universal, Sony and EMI – launched **Vevo**, a music-video aggregator, in early December. The site is a partnership with Google-owned YouTube, so users who search for music clips on YouTube will often be redirected to Vevo. "We didn't want to tell people to not go to YouTube anymore," says Vevo CEO Rio Carraeff. "That's not a good strategy." With more than 14,000 high-quality clips, Vevo is the biggest music-video hub on the Web, but Warner Music has refused to participate, which means the site lacks videos by Madonna, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Green Day and others. So will Vevo make money? Says one major-label source, "Vevo only makes sense if you believe there's so much ad money out there that can support an infrastructure that's very costly."

IN BRIEF

■ **Eddie Vedder** proposed to his longtime girlfriend, Jill McCormick, in early December. The couple have two children together.

■ **Rivers Cuomo** suffered serious injuries – including a lacerated spleen and a punctured lung – in a tour-bus accident in upstate New York on December 6th. Cuomo is expected to make a full recovery, but **Weezer** canceled three December dates and might reschedule several January shows as well.

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ENTERTAINING."**

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The Dude Goes Country in 'Crazy Heart'

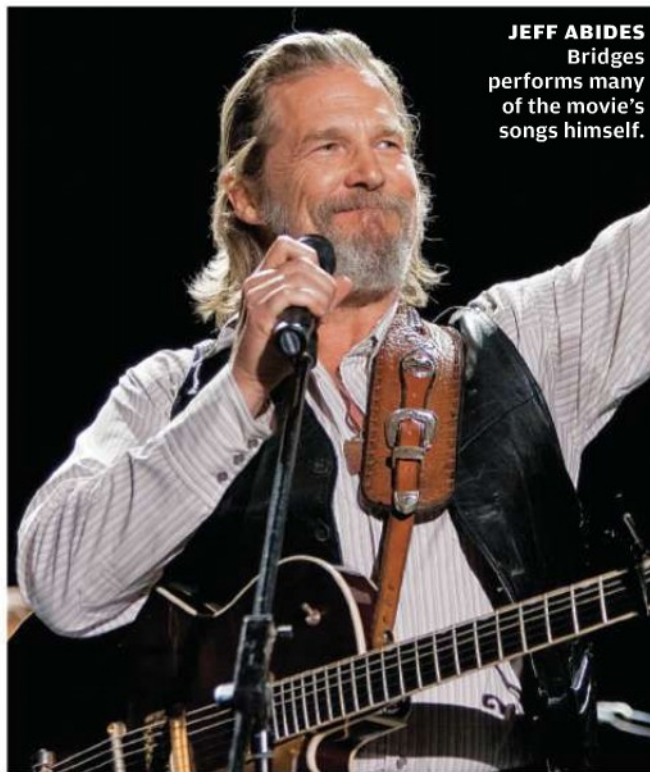
Jeff Bridges channels Merle, Waylon in star turn, earns Oscar buzz
By Andy Greene

BEFORE IT BECAME AN Oscar favorite, *Crazy Heart* – the story of a washed-up, drunken country singer yearning for a comeback – was dangerously close to becoming a straight-to-

MOVIES

DVD fiasco. But early buzz around Jeff Bridges' moving portrayal of singer Bad Blake – a fictional composite of Merle Haggard, Townes Van Zandt, Waylon Jennings and other country outlaws – and the brilliant soundtrack created by T Bone Burnett have turned the \$7 million film into one of the season's unexpected success stories. "This is a dream come true, man," says Bridges. "It's not often that you get an experience where you have a great time making it and you love the end product. Now the fact that people are going to go out and see it... that's the cherry on top of this beautiful sundae."

The film is the writing and directorial debut from actor Scott Cooper, whose previous Hollywood experience consisted of bit roles in *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* and



JEFF ABIDES
Bridges performs many of the movie's songs himself.

The X-Files television series. "I thought to myself, 'I need two people, or I'm not sure I can make this movie,'" says Cooper, who adapted an obscure 1987 Thomas Cobb novel for the screenplay. "They were Jeff Bridges and T Bone Burnett. I sent them both impassioned letters and – 20 drafts and three years later – here we are."

Bridges loved the screenplay, but he initially passed on it. "It was a great story, but it was missing an essential ingredient: the music," Bridges says. A chance encounter a year later with his old friend Burnett (they originally met on the set of 1980's *Heaven's Gate*) changed his mind. "Eventually, I said, 'Well, shoot. I'll do it if you do.'"

Burnett, who created hit soundtracks for *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *The Big Lebowski* and *Walk the Line*, dived into the project with incredible detail – writing and commissioning new songs for Bridges' character and creating a rich back story for Blake. "This is the first one where I've had to invent an identity for a character," says Burnett, who gave Bridges an iPod filled with Blake's hypothetical influences, from Billy Joe Shaver to Leonard Cohen. "I had to write lines for the character to sing that were part of the movie." Bridges and Colin Farrell (who plays a Tim McGraw-like superstar) perform the songs themselves, including the film's theme, "The Weary Kind," co-written by New Mexico alt-country singer Ryan Bingham. "If you didn't have that song, you wouldn't have a movie," says Bridges.

The film, which opens in wide release in January, is generating strong Oscar buzz, especially for Bridges, who has been nominated for Best Actor four times before – though not for his career-defining role as the Dude in *The Big Lebowski*. "The Dude and Bad Blake would get along well, man," says Bridges. "They're soulful cats. That's what makes them attractive: They're true to themselves." **B**

Fear and Love in Malibu: Melissa Etheridge's New LP

Album Fearless Love
Due Out Spring

By Jenny Eliscu

WHEN MELISSA Etheridge sat down to write new songs in late 2008, she'd just finished touring behind *The Awakening* – her first disc since fighting breast cancer, in 2005. As she thought about ways to expand on that album's themes of peace and self-acceptance, Etheridge, 48, says she reflected on "the little moments when everything comes down to the choice between love and fear."

Her 10th studio LP, *Fearless Love*, mines those opposing impulses – from the triumphant roots-rock title track to the downhearted ballad "Company," about fear of loneliness.

With those ideas in mind, Etheridge moved into a Malibu studio in July, and re-teamed with Ashlee Simpson and Bon Jovi producer John Shanks (who began his career 20 years ago as the guitarist in Etheridge's band). "Our studio was in a house on the beach," says Etheridge. "The vocal booth had windows, so you could look at the ocean." She brought her own chef, and



Etheridge in L.A. in November

even enjoyed, as she puts it, some "medical marijuana": "It was like music camp, and it created that atmosphere that I needed." In crafting the album, Etheridge says she wanted to honor her musical heroes.

"You'll hear Bruce Springsteen, the Who, Peter Dinklage," says the singer. "That's what makes rock & roll great: if we take our influences and then create through them." The title track echoes U2's most optimistic anthems, and the propulsive blues cut "Nervous" is a Rolling Stones-style "classic rock-shuffle song." Etheridge says the tune is about the jitters she got when she met her wife, Tammy Lynn Michaels, but it's one of her most confident songs in years. And though Etheridge says she gave up chasing chart numbers, a pop hit from this set would be a victory. "I want these to be songs people will be bopping their heads to, singing along to and then saying, 'Wait, what am I singing? I want a fearless love? Wow.'" **B**

CALIFORNIA GIRLS
Owens (left)
and White
in their San
Francisco
apartment



Former Cult Member's Speed-Fueled Rock Redemption

San Francisco duo Girls mix sweet Fifties pop with punk-rock vibe
By Jenny Eliscu

GROWING UP, CHRISTOPHER OWENS had to sneak listening to rock & roll the way some kids sneak pot. That's because Owens — singer-songwriter for blissed-out San Francisco retro-pop duo Girls — was raised in the deviant religious cult Children of God, where most pop culture was banned. But at 12, Owens

BREAKING

became obsessed with Guns n' Roses after hearing a clip of "Welcome to the Jungle" in a movie. When another Children of God member discovered the postcard of a shirtless Axl Rose that Owens kept hidden in his room, he was forced to fast and pray for three days. "They were pretty sure I was gay," says Owens, 30. "They would pray over me and try to make me confess things, but I didn't know what I was supposed to confess."

Children of God was founded in 1968 by Christian zealot

David Berg. Its members' only exposure to secular music was a small collection of cassettes called "My Old Favorites." The tapes, played at teen dances and other sanctioned events, featured Berg-approved tunes by the likes of Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley and the Everly Brothers. Those influences — classic Fifties doo-wop, rockabilly and surf rock — loom large on Girls' debut LP, *Album*, which was released last fall to critical acclaim. "When we were recording, there was no fear of borrowing ideas from other people," says Owens' bandmate, producer and bassist, Chet JR White, 30. "We had this grand goal, but we made a left turn and missed it. And in doing that, we hit on something else and found our sound."

Owens left Children of God at 16, and moved in with his older sister in Amarillo, Texas. He found refuge in punk rock and played guitar in local bands on and off for several years. "I thought the punk scene was exactly where I belonged," says Owens. "I was part of this group that was fighting against people that wanted to control them." He moved to San Francisco in

early 2005 to "become a famous painter," but was encouraged to write his own tunes by friends like White. Still nursing the wounds from a break-up, Owens developed a pair of new habits: amphetamines and songwriting. "I would stay up all night on speed and do nothing but write," he says. "I wrote, like, 40 songs in those first few months, because I was totally obsessed and in love with it."

The dozen songs on *Album* were born during those late-night sessions; most of them were recorded on cassette by White in the apartment he shares with Owens. The earnest, almost simplistic lyrics turn Owens' bizarre, often tragic upbringing — a brother died because the cult didn't believe in modern medicine — into redemptive pop songs. On the seven-minute mournful surf ballad "Hellhole Ratrace," Owens pleads, "I don't wanna cry my whole life through.... So come on and dance with me."

"Those are the first songs I ever wrote," he says. "If a song's three minutes long, it took three minutes to write. I know they're naive, but I don't know how to write anything else."

WHAT'S UP WITH...

Gucci Mane

Southern rap's hottest new MC scores hit album — from jail

WHO Atlanta rapper Gucci Mane released one of 2009's biggest hip-hop albums, *The State vs. Radric Davis*. It sold nearly 100,000 copies its first week out — despite the fact that the MC is in jail. Before he started his 12-month sentence for a probation violation in November (stemming from a 2005 assault conviction), Gucci Mane adopted Lil Wayne's marketing techniques: He's dropped around 20 mixtapes (including five in 2009), and he's been a steady radio presence, guesting on remixes of the Black Eyed Peas' "Boom Boom Pow" and Mariah Carey's "Obsessed." "Gucci's doing renegade marketing on his own," says Todd Moscovitz, president of Gucci's label, Asylum Records. "He put out three mixtapes



one day in October and didn't even tell us." For the 29-year-old rapper — who served time for violating the same probation in early 2009 — ubiquity is an insurance policy: "I took precautions to make sure I'm hot when I get out," he says.

SOUNDS LIKE Gucci punctuates heavy synth-backed beats with his relaxed Southern drawl on cuts about codeine-spiked beverages ("Lemonade") and rolling fat blunts ("Wasted"). "Gucci can rap a verse 36 different ways," says Drumma Boy, who produced four tracks on the LP. "He's good with wordplay. He's always saying dope shit."

WHAT'S NEXT Gucci — who says he'll be free "in a couple months" — is sketching out new songs. "I can't have a tape recorder in here," he says, "but I write on every piece of paper I can get my hands on."

NICOLE FREHSÉE

Justin Bieber's Adolescent Fantasy

The riot-starting R&B sensation takes on Disney and the JoBros

By Jason Gay

SEE THIS?" JUSTIN BIEBER asks excitedly, turning his head and showing off a fading red pucker on his cheek. "Can you see it?"

"It's Rihanna's kiss," he says. The night before, the 15-year-old Bieber attended a star-packed music-industry party in New York, where he met Bono and got a tender buss from the Barbadian pop siren. "I had a shower and everything – and it's still there."

Welcome to Justin Bieber's adolescent fantasy. Not long ago, the feathery-haired heartthrob was kicking back on his couch in Stratford, Ontario, cooing R&B ballads for fun. Now he's nudging the Jonas Brothers out of the tween locker room with his debut EP, *My World* (400,000 copies sold so far), and a YouTube following (100 million views) that redefines hormonal idolatry. In November, a Bieber appearance at a Long Island mall resulted in a riot before the singer even arrived. "They threatened to arrest me and my mom if we came," Bieber says, riding in the back of a black SUV from New York to a Philadelphia gig.

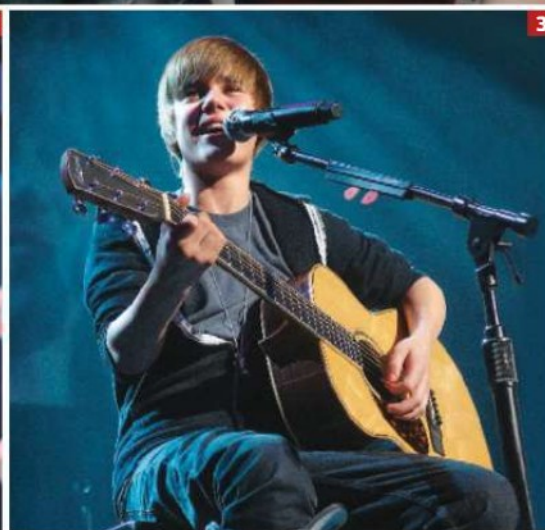
Bieber might look like the latest in prepackaged tween catnip, but what's unusual about his rapid ascension is that he's done it without the kind of synergistic TV platform Disney used for Miley and the Jonases. "I get thousands of e-mails every week saying, 'Please don't go Disney,'" says Bieber's manager, Scott "Scooter" Braun. "*Kids* made Justin. They made the fan pages, they spread the Twitters, they put up videos. I'm a good marketer, but not as good as them."

In the SUV, Bieber stretches his right leg. On his foot is a gray Aircast, the result of a fracture he sustained onstage before Thanksgiving in London, where he was opening for Taylor



Bieber Fever

Since being discovered on YouTube in 2006, Bieber has become America's newest teen idol. At a gig in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in August (1). With mentor Usher at New York's Jingle Ball in December (2). In St. Paul, Minnesota, last month (3).



Swift. "It sucks," he says. "I want to jump and dance. I want to take it off right now, but I can't." He yawns when describing the 15 hours of mandatory tutoring he receives each week. "I don't like sitting there – it's boring," he says. "I want to be in movies like what's her name – she's blond, she's young..."

"Dakota Fanning," his assistant says from a front seat.

"Yes! Dakota Fanning. Cool stuff like that."

Right now, Bieber should be in the 10th grade back in Ontario, where he starred in youth hockey and soccer. Bieber's parents split when he was just 10 months old – his father, Jeremy, works in construction in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and remains close to his son. Bieber and his mother, Pattie Mallette,

34, shared an affordable-housing apartment. "It was awful," Mallette says, laughing. "But we had a roof over our head and heat and food most of the time. It's quite different coming where we're coming from to being driven around in limos."

Bieber learned to sing by listening to his mom's Boyz II Men records. When he was 12, he began [Cont. on 24]



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Grilling and Chilling: Zac Brown's Big Year

Singer celebrates smash LP, Grammy noms and meeting Kid Rock, Buffett
By Christian Hoard

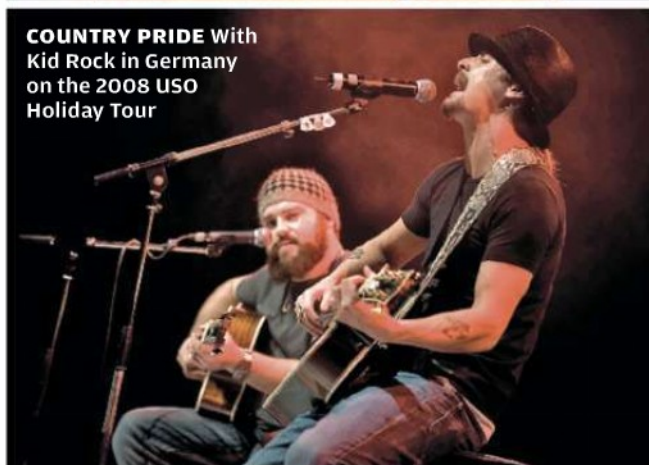
BEFORE ZAC BROWN takes the stage, he mans a grill. At most of his gigs in 2009, the platinum-selling country singer hosted an "eat and greet" for 120 fans, cooking up fresh steak cutlets slathered in Love Sauce, a concoction he spent years perfecting – and will start selling soon. "It's smoky and sweet," says Brown, who used to own a Southern-cooking restaurant near Atlanta. "It has coconut cream, bourbon, rosemary and love."

Brown had plenty of opportunities to cook: The mellow singer's major-label debut, *The Foundation*, sold more than 1.3 million copies, and Brown played nearly 300 shows last year, routinely pushing set times to Springsteen-esque extremes. "We've been doing three-and-a-half or four-hour shows every night," says the 31-year-old. "Last week, my voice almost went out."

In his bid to turn his laid-back ethos into big profits, Brown has found a perfect mentor: Jimmy Buffett. Brown met his hero last summer when he was invited to play a show at California's Bohemian Grove, an exclusive playground for right-wing power brokers, including both Presidents Bush. Brown and Buffett traded songs around a campfire: "He played 'A Pirate Looks at Forty,' then we played 'Toes,' which he inspired," Brown says. Buffett loves Brown's mix of Nashville harmonies, jammy



TOP CHEF Brown (center) in Boca Raton, Florida, in November. He grills for fans before every gig.



COUNTRY PRIDE With Kid Rock in Germany on the 2008 USO Holiday Tour

grooves and beach-loving lyrics. "He's tough to categorize," says Buffett, who paired with Brown for an episode of CMT's *Crossroads*. "But he's found his own audience."

Brown grew up near Atlanta as the 11th of 12 children (in-

cluding step- and half-siblings). "My mom and my stepfather would have knock-down, drag-out fights," says Brown. "My mom and I would stay at a shelter when things got real bad."

Brown escaped to his dad's house at 14. Soon after, he

began writing songs, and decided to make music his career after catching a show by Nineties one-hit wonder Shawn Mullins ("Lullaby"). He gigged for years (and did time in a Christian band called 3:16), and blew up when "Chicken Fried" – a slow-rolling celebration of simple pleasures like fried meat and a mother's love – topped the country charts last year. "I'll walk into a bar in Pensacola and hear people do karaoke to it," says a bemused Brown.

This month, Brown will start work on a new album (no release date has been set), and he'll also head to L.A. to see if he wins any of the three Grammys he's nominated for, including Best New Artist. "I'm a celebrity now," Brown says. "I find that awkward."

JUSTIN BIEBER

[Cont. from 22] uploading videos of himself performing songs like Ne-Yo's "So Sick" to YouTube. "Every time I put one up, I got more views, and I started getting calls from people in the record industry," he says. The most persistent calls came from Braun, a well-connected 28-year-old who helped launch the career of "I Love College" rapper Asher Roth. Braun piqued the interest of a pair of superstar friends: Usher and

Justin Timberlake, who summoned Bieber to Memphis for an audition. "We walked in, and who greets me at the door but Jessica Biel," Bieber recalls. "And she's like, 'Hello, babe.' Well, she didn't say that – but I was thinking it! I sang 'Cry Me a River,' and we watched March Madness basketball."

But it was Usher – who'd met Bieber in Atlanta when Braun was first courting him – who won out. "He had all the nuances of a classic artist," Usher says. "Very cute, for all the young

girls – gotta have that. He had swagger. And most important, he had talent." Bieber signed with Island Def Jam. Working with Usher and producers like Tricky Stewart (Beyoncé's "Single Ladies [Put a Ring on It]"), he recorded *My World*, a sunny splash of radio-ready R&B with unabashedly innocent lyrics. On one cut, "Bigger," Bieber sings, "Now the bullies in the schoolyard/Can't take our hugs and our kisses from us."

A few days later, at the Z100 Jingle Ball at Madison

Square Garden, Bieber steals the spotlight from Swift and John Mayer, who jokes, "I'm John Mayer – I'm 52 years old." When Bieber finally takes the stage, the squealing rocks the Garden. Usher shakes his head in amazement. But it can't be a late night for pop's new idol. At 5 a.m., Bieber is jetting to Las Vegas to tape a segment for Dick Clark's New Year's Eve show and to the White House for a Christmas special. "I'm excited," he says. "I guess Obama's daughters like me."

He's a guardian. Not an angel.

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America's Inner Guido

The hard-boozing, hair-gel-loving knuckleheads of 'Jersey Shore' just might be what this country needs right now **By Rob Sheffield**

MTV'S "JERSEY SHORE" is one of those genius ideas that looks simple in retrospect: *The Sopranos* plus *Laguna Beach*. It's the network's first smash in ages, complete with sponsors pulling ads and politicians protesting. No wonder America has fallen madly in love with these self-proclaimed guidos and guidettes – there's a little *Jersey Shore* in all of us. "I have unbelievable mass appeal," says the muscle-bound party monster who calls himself "the Situation" and talks like Gertrude Stein. "Everybody loves the

Jersey Shore

Thursdays, 10 p.m., MTV

Situation. And if you don't love the Situation, I'm gonna *make* you love the Situation!"

In the days of old, the Jersey Shore was an idyllic seaside retreat, but now it's a place for MTV's eight handpicked housemates to booze and brawl, after a hard day of work at the Shore Store or binge-tanning at the Simply Sun Salon. A typical night out in Seaside Heights involves getting the crap kicked out of you by girls with names

like JWOWW and Snooki after a few sips of Ron-Ron Juice. Can this place be real? Who cares? It's a runaway American dream where the highway's jammed with broken guidos on a last-chance hair-gel drive.

It's weird to think how just a couple of years ago, people got a kick out of *The Hills*, watching all those prissy little rich twits whine about how much they hate one another. But whether it's massive economic hardship or just celebuntante burnout, it's *Jersey Shore*'s America now. These kids are not deluded by that *Hills* sense of entitlement. They know summer will end and they'll have to go back to their ordinary lives. So eat, drink and hook up with the Situation, for tomorrow ye shall be right back selling I SHAVED MY BALLS FOR THIS? T-shirts.

The contrast is all there in the way the ladies have each other's backs. While the *Hills* girls were catty frenemies, the *Jersey Shore* guidettes will kill for one another. They don't mess around with eye-rolls – they get blood on their pressions. JWOWW punches a girl who calls Snooki fat, but she tells the others the girl called *all* the housemates fat, so Snooki

won't feel singled out. It's a tiny gesture, but a moving one. Would Audrina do that for her own grandmother? And who wouldn't love to see JWOWW punch out Heidi or Spencer?

While the kids rage all night, they still find plenty of time to debate what is and isn't classy. It's practically a symposium on the code of classy. Wearing a tie to a club called Headliners? Classy. Wearing heels with a

T-shirt that proclaims SHORE STORE WHORE? Classy yet sassy. Hot-tub nudity? Maybe we should let Angelina field this one: "They're takin' their underwear off in the fuckin' Jacuzzi! Are you dumb? That's classy? No!"

The girls may have come to the Shore to fight, but the boys came to look hot. The whole guido pageant is a celebration of male vanity, as the boys check out each other's blow-outs and lip gloss. But the girls could give a fuck about body-image issues. While the Situation, Pauly D, Vinny and Ronnie compete to be the prettiest thing in the room, the girls just open another bag of Doritos and pound another beer; JWOWW's hair looks like it got chomped by a bleach-drooling coyote. It only adds to the fun that MTV these days is full of ads for *New Moon*, another teen utopia where the pretty boys get dolled up like supermodels, while the girl looks like she just slept on the bus. Just think: Wouldn't the *Twilight* movies be cooler if the Cullens got a house in Seaside Heights, complete with a vampire hot tub? (But bringing home were-wolves? Not classy.)

Crazy as it gets, at heart *Jersey Shore* is really just an old-fashioned sitcom family, where everybody fights, then hugs and makes up, and invites Lenny and Squiggy over for lasagna. The ugliest moment, circulated widely online, came when Snooki got punched in the face. Afterward, there's a touching scene where Ronnie holds Snooki as she cries and tells her, "You know we fuckin' love you." But the next night, Snooki is back in the bars, getting into fights. "I see hair being pulled and all that shit," Snooki says. "And I'm like, 'Omigod, how do I get in?'" Not one to dwell on trauma, our girl Snooki.

People may pretend to watch *Jersey Shore* because they look down on these kids. But really, we envy their ability to look in the mirror and say, "Shoot, could that be the Situation? Yes, sir, it is." These kids are *into* themselves. That's why this show has inspired so much outrage. They don't crave our approval. It's summertime, and the Situation is easy. **4**

THE WATCH LIST

The Forgotten

Tuesdays, 10 p.m., ABC

This is the rare comeback where everything goes right, casting Christian Slater as a haunted cop bonding with the dead. *True Romance* fans have to pray for a crossover with *Medium* so he can be reunited with Patricia Arquette.

Spectacle

Wednesdays, 10 p.m., Sundance

Who knew Elvis Costello would someday be America's favorite rock & roll talk-show host? He knows how to chat up musicians, coaxing them into revealing details they've never said in public before. **R.S.**

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"If you don't send your boyfriend naked pictures, then I feel bad for him." —Rihanna

Random Notes



Axl at LAX:
"I requested a
kosher dinner!"
Inset: Onstage
in Taipei.

Axl's Bumpy Ride

Finally, crazy Axl is back! In his first public appearance since 2007, Axl Rose went loco at LAX, freaking out on an overeager paparazzi. After being restrained by his hottie gal pal, model Sasha Volkova, Rose boarded a plane for Taiwan to kick-start G n' R's Asian tour. It was unclear if Rose left the cornrows at home, or put them in his carry-on.



DROPPIN' BOMBS
Kid Rock brought two
dangerous missiles — the one
under his arm and the one in
his pants — while visiting the
troops in Southeast Asia.



WHO'S THE BOSS?

Mel Brooks, Robert De Niro and Bruce Springsteen were among the artists honored at the annual Kennedy Center Honors in D.C. Obama called Bruce the "rock & roll laureate of a generation," before pre-emptively quashing any possible beef by stating, "I'm the president, but he's the Boss."

STING THEM BELLS

'Tis true that Sting doth desire to pluck weird stringed instruments. At New York's St. John the Divine, he donned Victorian garb and gleefully wailed on a lute, performing songs from his holiday LP, *If on a Winter's Night...*





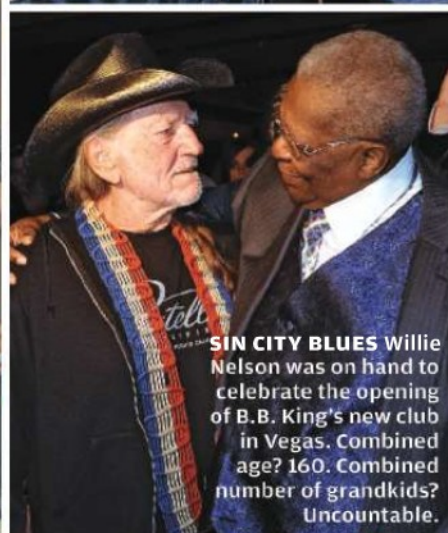
T-PAINFUL Aerosmith are looking for a new singer, but seriously - T-Pain?!? Joe Perry and the Auto-Tune auteur jammed on "Walk This Way" in Miami.



PUMPKIN PIE Rumors are swirling about a steamy love match between Billy Corgan and reality-TV detritus Jessica Simpson, who were spotted in New York. Watch out, Duritz!



FOX AND FRIENDS More than \$4 million was raised at Michael J. Fox's annual New York fundraiser to battle Parkinson's disease. The oddest supergroup ever - Elvis Costello, Gregg Allman, Roger Daltrey, John Popper, Steven Tyler and Marty McFly - rocked the party with an Aerosmith classic.



SIN CITY BLUES Willie Nelson was on hand to celebrate the opening of B.B. King's new club in Vegas. Combined age? 160. Combined number of grandkids? Uncountable.

Lips Are for Kids

For once, the Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne wasn't the weirdest dude in the room. The Oklahoma psych rockers visited the set of Nick Jr.'s trippy kids show *Yo Gabba Gabba!*, where they chilled with host DJ Lance Rock, Muno the red cyclops and Plex the robot, and played their new jam, "I Can Be a Frog." Coyne accessorized with gold boots and two hats, a nod to a "pleasantly autistic character" from Oklahoma known as Three-Hat Billy. "The costume room is fucking fantastical," says the singer. "And it ups the ante when you're standing there next to a giant pink donkey."

The Flaming Lips will appear on *Yo Gabba Gabba!* later this year.



As the Wor



World Burns



How Big Oil and Big Coal mounted one of the most aggressive lobbying campaigns in history to block progress on global warming **BY JEFF GOODELL**

THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE TRANSFORMATIVE moment on global warming, the tipping point when America proved to the world that capitalism has a conscience, that we take the fate of the planet seriously. According to the script, Congress would pass a landmark bill committing the U.S. to deep cuts in carbon emissions. President Obama would then arrive in Copenhagen for the international climate summit, armed with the moral and political capital he needed to challenge the rest of the world to do the same. After all, wasn't this the kind of bold move the Norwegians were anticipating when they awarded Obama the Nobel Peace Prize?

As we now know, it didn't work out that way. Obama arrived in Copenhagen last month without any legislation committing the U.S. to reduce carbon pollution. Instead of reaching agreement on how to stop cooking the planet, the summit devolved into bickering over who bears the most blame for turning up the heat. The world once again missed an opportunity to avert disaster – and the delay is likely to have deadly consequences. In recent years, we have moved from talking about the possibility of climate change to watching it unfold before our eyes. The Arctic is melting, wildfires are turning into infernos, warm-weather insects are devouring forests, droughts are getting longer and more lethal. And the more we learn about climate change, the more it becomes apparent how enormous the risks are. Just a few years ago, researchers estimated that sea levels would likely rise 17 inches by 2100. Now they believe it could be three feet or more – a cataclysmic shift that would doom many of the world's cities, including London and New Orleans, and create tens of millions of climate refugees.

Our collective response to the emerging catastrophe verges on suicidal. World leaders have been talking about tackling

climate change for nearly 20 years now – yet carbon emissions keep going up and up. “We are in a race against time,” says Rep. Jay Inslee, a Democrat from Washington who has fought for sharp reductions in planet-warming pollution. “Mother Nature isn't sitting around waiting for us to get our political act together.” In fact, our failure to confront global warming is more than simply political incompetence. Over the past year, the corporations and special interests most responsible for climate change waged an all-out war to prevent Congress from cracking down on carbon pollution in time for Copenhagen. The oil and coal industries deployed an unprecedented army of lobbyists, spent millions on misleading studies and engaged in outright deception to derail climate legislation. “It was the most aggressive and corrupt lobbying campaign I've ever seen,” says Paul Begala, a veteran Democratic consultant.

By preventing meaningful action in Copenhagen, the battle to kill the climate bill provided the world's biggest polluters with a lucrative victory – one that comes at the rest of the world's expense. “In the long term, the fossil-fuel industry is going to lose this war,” says Kevin Knobloch, president of the Union of Concerned Sci-

entists. "But in the short term, they are doing everything they can to delay the revolution. For them, what this fight is really about is buying precious time to maximize profits from carbon sources. It's really no more complicated than that."

FOR THE NATION'S DIRTIEST carbon polluters, the election of President Obama was not good news. Big-energy interests had a real pal in George W. Bush, but during the 2008 campaign, Obama put the fate of the planet above the fate of the fossil-fuel industry. America's oil addiction, he declared, is "one of the greatest challenges of our generation."

Even before the election was over, those who had the candidate's ear were urging Obama to move quickly to enact climate legislation. In a lengthy memo to the campaign, an experienced veteran of the climate wars advised that the incoming president would "be able to claim a mandate to lead boldly" on carbon pollution. The memo recommended that Obama take immediate steps to design a plan of attack by setting up a SWAT team of key advisers and congressional leaders. "The president must seize the debate," the memo warned, "before others hijack or derail it."

Obama's first moves on the climate front were encouraging. He appointed Carol Browner, head of the EPA under Bill Clinton and a close confidante of Al Gore, as "climate czar," and he named Steven Chu, a respected scientist who understood the need to confront global warming, as energy secretary. A month after taking office, he also moved to implement a 2007 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court empowering the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant. The threat to Big Coal and Big Oil was implicit: If energy interests balked at working with Congress to create a new system to curb carbon pollution, the administration would simply unleash federal regulators. "If Congress does nothing," warned Sen. Barbara Boxer, who was spearheading climate legislation as chair of the Senate environment committee, "we will be watching EPA do our job."

Obama also had something else going for him: The man he had defeated for president was one of the chief backers of a bipartisan plan to rein in climate-warming pollution. It was widely assumed that John McCain, who had co-sponsored a plan known as "cap and trade" with Democrat Joe Lieberman back in 2003, would be a crucial ally in selling tough, effective carbon limits to his GOP colleagues in the Senate. At root, cap-and-trade is a fairly simple idea: The government sets an economywide cap on carbon-dioxide emis-

sions by issuing a fixed number of permits for carbon pollution each year. Those permits can then be traded on the open market, enabling polluters to decide for themselves whether it's cheaper to cut emissions or buy permits. The same approach worked spectacularly well in curbing acid rain two decades ago, reducing sulfur dioxide pollution far faster and cheaper than anyone had anticipated. Celebrated as one of the great success stories of the environmental movement, the program has spawned a number of imitators, including a European market for carbon emissions that got under way in 2005, as well as a statewide carbon-trading system under development in California. That's not to say there aren't prob-



OBAMA IN COPENHAGEN Without a firm pledge to cut U.S. emissions, the president was unable to win a tough global treaty.

lems with cap-and-trade; tracking CO₂ from millions of sources poses a daunting challenge, and granting too many loopholes known as "carbon offsets" could render the entire system meaningless. But the plan enjoyed wide support among environmentalists, economists and business leaders as the fastest, cheapest and most politically viable way to cut climate-warming pollution. "The most important thing," Chu told *ROLLING STONE* last spring, "is to get the architecture in place and to begin to move in a new direction."

Any plans Obama had to move quickly on climate legislation, however, were derailed by the economic disaster he inherited from the Bush administration. As the new president scrambled to bail out Wall Street, keep GM afloat and win approval for a \$787 billion plan to stimulate the economy (including \$80 billion for clean energy and green jobs), reining in carbon pollution dropped lower and lower on the list of pressing demands. "In the midst of the worst recession in a gen-

eration," says Jason Grumet, who served as Obama's top energy adviser during the campaign, "climate change isn't what leaps to mind for the average voter." When it came time to set his legislative agenda, Obama decided to make health care, rather than global warming, his top priority. "Health care has a populist feel to it," explains a campaign insider. "It's much more the kind of meat-and-potatoes issue that Obama feels comfortable with."

The decision to put health care first infuriated some activists, who feared the president would be unable to win climate legislation in time for Copenhagen. "Why not push a climate bill as Green Stimulus, Part Two?" asks one top environmental economist. But leaders in the House had already decided to push through a climate bill on their own – even without strong public support from the White House. Taking the lead on the measure was Rep. Henry Waxman, chairman of the powerful House Energy and Commerce Committee, and Rep. Ed Markey, head of the House Select Committee for Energy Independence and Global Warming. As one climate activist close to the administration steamed, "What good is health care on a dead planet?"

WAXMAN AND MARKEY'S bill – the American Clean Energy and Security Act – was hardly a silver bullet aimed at the heart of Big Coal and Big Oil. It set wimpy near-term goals for reducing carbon (only 20 percent by 2020) and included far too many offsets (2 billion tons a year). All in all, it was nowhere near as tough as it needed to be to cut emissions quickly and stave off the most extreme consequences of climate change. But it did contain strong measures to improve energy efficiency, and it represented a crucial first step in creating the framework for a low-carbon economy. "The legislation now on the table isn't the bill we'd ideally want, but it's the bill we can get – and it's vastly better than no bill at all," observed Paul Krugman, the Nobel Prize laureate.

If the bill pulled its punches on global warming, that's because it was based in large part on a business-friendly blueprint that had been laid out in January, only a few days before Obama was sworn in as president. Assembled by the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, a coalition of leading environmental groups and major companies like GE and ConocoPhillips, the plan called for reducing carbon pollution by as little as 14 percent before 2020 – while continuing to allow conventional coal plants to be built. The industry-driven plan prompted the National Wildlife Federation to pull out of USCAP, calling for action that "measures up to what scientists say is needed."

Still, even in its diluted form, the House bill alarmed many coal and oil companies. Foreseeing a showdown over climate

Contributing editor JEFF GOODELL, the author of "Big Coal," interviewed climate scientist James Hansen in RS 1085.

change, the energy industry had been busy packing Capitol Hill with lobbyists. By last year, according to the Center for Public Integrity, the number of lobbyists devoted to climate change had soared by more than fivefold since 2003, to a total of 2,810 – or five lobbyists for every lawmaker in Washington. “I had no idea this many lobbyists even existed in Washington,” says former senator Tim Wirth, now head of the United Nations Foundation. Only 138 of the lobbyists were pushing for alternative energy – the rest were heavily weighted toward the old fossil-fuel mafia, most of whom oppose tough carbon caps. The most aggressive foes were coal polluters like Peabody Energy and the Southern Company, an Atlanta-based utility known for its prowess on Capitol Hill. “They’re kneecap breakers,” says one congressional staffer.

For Southern and Peabody, as well as for oil giants like ExxonMobil, the Waxman-Markey bill meant war: If they could kill it, they could not only stall action on

day,” Markey says. But the Heritage Foundation is nothing if not a big, well-greased disinformation machine. “We noticed that every time a constituent came in to talk to us about the bill, they would be quoting the same numbers,” says one congressional staffer. “We knew they were a lie, but they were everywhere.”

Energy lobbyists found a willing ally in the Republican Party, which had decided to deny any legislative victory to President Obama – even if it meant cooking the planet in the process. Rep. Joe Barton, a Republican from Texas who had been replaced by Waxman as chair of the House energy committee, pledged to launch “crafty” attacks on the climate bill, comparing the GOP’s battle plan to “guerrilla warfare.”

“I talked to Joe Barton as this process began, expressing a desire to work together with him on this,” recalls Waxman. “He told me he didn’t believe in the science of global warming, didn’t think it was a problem and didn’t want to try to solve it.”

Lobbyists for coal polluters like the Southern Company went to work: **“THEY’RE KNEECAP BREAKERS.”**

climate at home, they could also wreck the chances for an international deal in Copenhagen. These companies had spent decades funding studies that undermined the science of global warming, using tactics honed by the tobacco industry to sow doubt and confusion in hopes of staving off regulation. Now, they switched their line of attack. Rather than arguing that global warming isn’t real, they tried to shift the fear from climate change to the specter of a massive government intervention. The climate bill, they argued, was nothing more than a national energy tax that would cause energy prices to skyrocket and destroy American jobs. As evidence, they pointed to a study by the Heritage Foundation, long a purveyor of junk science favored by the energy industry. (The conservative think tank has received at least \$500,000 from ExxonMobil and \$3 million from funders with ties to Koch Industries, a major oil-refining company.) Not surprisingly, the Heritage study predicted economic disaster if the climate bill were signed into law: Electricity rates would jump by 90 percent, gas prices would increase by 74 percent, the average energy bill would rise by \$1,500 a year, and as many as 2.5 million jobs would disappear.

This, of course, was complete bullshit. The most credible analysis of the bill, from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, found that the measure would cost most families no more than \$175 a year – the equivalent of “about a postage stamp a

A key element of the “crafty” tactics employed by the Republicans involved a simple approach: lying. Cap-and-trade, they argued, should really be called “cap-and-tax.” Throughout the debate, GOP members of the House cited a study by MIT that, they claimed, showed the climate bill would “cost every American family up to \$3,100 per year in higher energy prices.” John Reilly, an MIT professor and one of the authors of the study, called House Republicans and protested that they were distorting his findings. But a week later, House Minority Leader John Boehner used the \$3,100 figure again, and the National Republican Congressional Committee employed it in dozens of press releases. Reilly sent a blunt letter to Boehner and Markey’s committee, noting that \$3,100 was actually “ten times the correct estimate, which is approximately \$340.”

But deception wasn’t the only card that House Republicans had to play. As the climate bill moved through Waxman’s committee, Barton and his troops fell back on tactical games to stall the measure. Before the committee voted, Barton threatened to have the entire 900-plus-page bill read aloud, hoping that Democrats would get sick of the delay and simply walk out. When Barton discovered that the committee had brought in a speed-reader to tear through the bill, he relented. But as the ranking Republican on the committee, he tied up the process by introducing 400 amendments designed to weaken or stall

the bill. By the time the measure came to a vote last June, however, it had become clear that Barton and his fellow Republicans weren’t the only ones listening to lobbyists from the energy industry.

REP. RICK BOUCHER, A DEMOCRAT from the coal fields of southern Virginia, is a dapper little guy with a large forehead and big round glasses. He wears nice suits and well-polished shoes – you could easily mistake him for a Wall Street analyst. With Boucher, however, the smell of money comes not from swapping derivatives but from burning carbon. Boucher is the House’s top recipient of cash from Big Coal, raking in nearly twice as many contributions – more than \$144,000 last year – as any other congressman. The climate bill was his moment to shine. “The negotiations between Boucher, Waxman and the coal industry were the crucible in which this deal was done,” says Jason Grumet, Obama’s energy adviser. “Without it, there would be no legislation.”

For the Democrats, passing the climate bill came down to a simple equation: how many favors they were prepared to shovel out to Boucher’s pals in the coal industry. Without support from Democrats in key energy states, the bill didn’t stand a chance. Waxman and Markey, both of whom had recently backed what amounted to a moratorium on new coal-fired plants, were hardly friends of the industry. But now they were willing to cut a deal – and so was Big Coal. Instituting a system to curb carbon pollution, the industry knew, would reveal coal for what it is: the nation’s single biggest contributor to global warming, and a source of air pollution that kills 24,000 people each year.

To shift the focus of the debate, the industry launched an all-out effort to rebrand its product, spending \$18 million on a high-profile ad campaign to sell Americans on the virtues of “clean coal.” The campaign – paid for by the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE), a front group for coal companies and utilities – was vague about how coal could actually be cleaned up, relying instead on images of hip hardware like Mac computers to suggest that technology could somehow solve the problem. What the ads failed to note was that the technology behind “clean coal” – known as carbon-capture-and-sequestration – is still a pipe dream. There is not a single commercial coal-fired power plant in the world that captures and buries its carbon emissions, for a very simple reason: The process is far too complicated and expensive. But the coal industry knew it didn’t need to have a real solution – it could just tout the promise of new technology, without actually changing a thing.

To drive home its message on Capitol Hill, the coal industry spent \$10 million

on lobbying – far more than any other special interest devoted to climate change. (ACCCE says the figure includes advertising and grass-roots advocacy that most groups don't report.) And to make sure congressmen were paying attention, ACCCE's member firms and their employees, including top executives, contributed more than \$15 million to federal campaigns.

The money proved to be well-spent. Shortly after the climate bill was introduced in the House, Boucher spent six weeks locked in backroom negotiations between his friends in the coal industry and key members of the House energy committee, where the bill was being marked up. Boucher had been chair of the energy subcommittee during the previous Congress, and he knew where the bodies were buried. "Boucher is a very tough, very smart negotiator," says a committee staffer who participated in the negotiations. "He knew exactly what he could get and what he couldn't from both sides."

In the end, Boucher emerged with a sweetheart deal for Big Coal. The climate bill was amended to include more free permits for carbon polluters, as well as \$1 billion a year to support "clean coal" research. (That was on top of the \$3.4 billion in research funds already included in the president's stimulus plan.) All told, the climate bill now contained \$60 billion in support for coal – far more than the aid given to wind, solar and all other forms of renewable energy combined.

Even more striking, Boucher succeeded in switching a single word in the legislation that could potentially save the coal industry billions of dollars. When a draft of the bill was first released in late March, it stipulated that coal plants "finally" permitted after January 1st, 2009, would be subject to new regulations, which was likely to include a requirement that they capture and store carbon emissions. But in the final version of the bill, the word "finally" was changed to "initially" – instantly exempting the 40 or so coal plants currently under construction from the new regulations.

The polluter-friendly measures won the support of some big coal burners, including American Electric Power, the nation's dirtiest utility. But even with all the handouts, the industry's most conservative factions continued to oppose the climate bill. In the final hours, the lobbying went into overdrive. ACCCE spent \$545,000 on what turned out to be a fraudulent "grass-roots" campaign, using a Washington consultant called Bonner and Associates to bombard undecided congressmen with fake letters, supposedly from the NAACP, demanding that they vote against the climate bill. The blatant deception – and the use of forged documents – was not discovered until after the vote. "It was old tobacco tactics, pure and simple," Rep. Inslee says.

By that point, the months of backroom deal-making had succeeded in diluting the climate bill and loading it up with tax breaks and subsidies for industry. By the time it came to the floor on June 26th, the measure clocked in at more than 1,400 pages. The all-important target for reducing carbon pollution by 2020 had been cut from 20 percent to 17 percent. The goals for boosting renewable energy were cut nearly in half. The EPA's authority to regulate carbon emissions had been gutted. And instead of auctioning off all pollution permits, as Obama had promised during the campaign, the bill gave 83 percent of them away for free – up to half of them, in the near term, to industrial polluters. Accord-



HOT AIR Funded by oil money, Tea Party leader Tim Phillips (left) staged a tour to fan public fears over climate legislation.

ing to an analysis by Stanford University economists, polluters received \$134 billion in allowances that weren't necessary to ensure America's industrial stability. The nation's dirtiest corporations, the ones most responsible for global warming, had just been given a huge government handout.

Still, even with all its flaws, the climate measure was the first bill Congress had ever seriously considered that placed a comprehensive cap on carbon pollution. And if the bill failed, it might be years before supporters had another shot. "We didn't make a single compromise we didn't have to get the bill passed," Markey says. With the help of President Obama, who met with undecided members, the climate bill squeaked through the House by a vote of 219 to 212. Even with the president's efforts, 44 Democrats voted against the measure.

Markey believes the legislation will ultimately be seen as groundbreaking: "In 100 years, we'll look back on this moment and realize that 2009 was the year the United States finally decided to take the prob-

lems on our planet seriously." And with all its industry giveaways, the bill should have appeased opponents; Waxman, who has a reputation as a pragmatic deal-cutter, notes that the measure "represents a broad diversity of concerns and points of view."

But even in its watered-down form, the climate bill drew fierce attacks from Republicans. The eight GOP congressmen who voted for the measure were labeled "cap and traitors" by party loyalists, and several were told they will face primary challenges next year. The National Republican Congressional Committee also ran ads targeting a dozen or so vulnerable Democrats who supported the bill, including Rep. Tom Perriello of Virginia, who had won his seat by only 727 votes. The ads – foreshadowing the fight to come during this year's midterm elections – accused Perriello of voting for the "Pelosi Energy Tax," falsely claiming that the climate bill would raise energy costs for his constituents by \$1,870 per family.

To Perriello, this was the final insult. "It wasn't enough that the fossil-fuel industry got millions of dollars worth of subsidies and benefits from the bill – they then had to act as if the passage of the bill were Armageddon," he says. "If anyone should have been unhappy about that legislation, it was the environmentalists."

IN THE HOURS AFTER THE HOUSE vote, while Markey was celebrating with staffers on a rainy night in Washington, his cellphone rang. It was White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel, calling to congratulate him. "I didn't think you could do it," Emanuel told him.

The truth is, the climate bill's passage caught the White House off-guard. There was no strategy in place to advance the bill through the Senate, no plans for a prime-time address from the president on the urgency of confronting climate change. "They were surprised by the bill's speed," says one insider. "They suddenly had to focus on where to place their political bets." Boggled down in the fight over health care, Obama faced a dilemma: prodding senators to get moving on climate change might derail health care even further, but waiting too long risked missing the deadline for Copenhagen. "The world was waiting for the Senate to act," says Fred Krupp, head of the Environmental Defense Fund.

The White House wasn't the only one scrambling to regroup. The energy industry and its Republican allies realized that their scare tactics on climate change weren't working: To crank up the opposition, they needed to crank up the fear. To do that, they adopted both the rhetoric and the infrastructure of the burgeoning Tea Party movement that had been formed to fight health care reform. Cap-and-trade, the Republicans began to argue, was part of Obama's master plan [Cont. on 62]

The Climate Killers

Meet the 17 polluters and deniers who are derailing efforts to curb global warming **BY TIM DICKINSON**



THE PROFITEER

Warren Buffett

CEO, Berkshire Hathaway

DESPITE BEING A KEY ADVISER to Obama during the financial crisis, America's best-known investor has been blasting the president's push to curb global warming – using the same lying points promoted by far-right Republicans. The climate bill passed by the

House, Buffett insists, is a “huge tax – and there's no sense calling it anything else.” What's more, he says, the measure would mean “very poor people are going to pay a lot more money for their electricity.” Never mind that the climate bill, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office,

would actually save Americans with the lowest incomes about \$40 a year.

But Buffett, whose investments have the power to move entire markets, is doing far more than bad-mouthing climate legislation – he's literally banking on its failure. In recent months, the Oracle of Omaha has invested billions in carbon-polluting industries, seeking to cash in as the world burns. His conglomerate, Berkshire Hathaway, has added 1.28 million shares of America's biggest climate polluter, ExxonMobil, to its balance sheet. And in November, Berkshire placed a huge wager on the future of coal pollution, purchasing the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad for \$26 billion – the largest acquisition of Buffett's storied career. BNSF is the nation's top hauler of coal, shipping some 300 million tons a year. That's enough to light up 10 percent of the nation's homes – many of which are powered by another Berkshire subsidiary, MidAmerican Energy. Although Berkshire is the largest U.S. firm not to disclose its carbon pollution – and second globally only to the Bank of China – its utilities have the worst emissions intensity in America, belching more than 65 million tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere in 2008 alone.

As a savvy investor, Buffett would only buy a coal-shipping railroad if he felt certain that Congress will fail to crack down on climate pollution. “Whatever hurts coal also hurts the railroad business,” observes Peter Gray, a corporate climate attorney at the international law firm of McKenna Long & Aldridge. “Mr. Buffett must believe that efforts to adopt cap-and-trade legislation will fail.”

That's a strange position for the billionaire to take, given that he's promised to donate more than 80 percent of his fortune to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “As someone who is giving so much money to international development, Buffett ought to know better,” says Joe Romm, who served as an assistant energy secretary under Bill Clinton. “He ought to have spent a great deal of time considering the greatest threats to developing countries – which would have quickly educated him about climate change.”



THE DISINFORMER

Rupert Murdoch

CEO, News Corporation

IN 2007, WHEN THE WORLD'S MOST powerful media baron announced his newfound conviction that global warming "poses clear, catastrophic threats," it seemed as though the truth about climate change might finally get the attention it deserves. Murdoch promised that not only would News Corp. itself become carbon-neutral by 2010, but that his media outlets would explain the urgent need for a cap on carbon emissions. Climate change, he pledged, would be addressed as a sober reality across the News Corp. empire, whether as a plot element on 24 or in a story on Fox News. "I don't think there's any question of my conviction on this issue," Murdoch declared. "I've come to feel it very strongly."

Since then, however, Murdoch and his media operations have become the nation's leading source of disinformation about climate change. In October, Fox Business ran an extended segment on "The Carbon Myth," inviting a hack scientist to "make the case" that more carbon pollution is

actually "good for the environment." The *Wall Street Journal* has continued to lie not only about the reality of global warming but about Obama's efforts to prevent it, denouncing climate legislation as "likely to be the biggest tax in American history." The *New York Post* insisted that the Copenhagen climate negotiations were little more than a meet-up for "shamsters, scam artists and assorted 'global warming' opportunists" who planned to "transfer a trillion bucks from the economies of the world's developed nations to Third World kleptocrats – with God-only-knows how much cash sticking to the fingers of well-connected U.N. bureaucrats." And on Fox News, right-wing attack dog Sean Hannity misinformed his viewers that 2009 – the fifth-hottest year in the past 130 – was "one of the coldest years on record." Hannity then summed up the deranged denial that permeates Murdoch's media empire: "I don't believe climate change is real," he said. "I think this is global-warming hysteria and alarmism."

THE FAKE PROTESTER

Jack Gerard

President, American Petroleum

AS HEAD OF THE AMERICAN Petroleum Institute, Gerard serves as the frontman for the nation's oil and gas industry, including energy giants like Exxon, Shell, BP and Halliburton. Although API now claims to back the move to a "carbon-constrained economy," Gerard has been working behind the scenes to scuttle climate legislation. According to an internal memo leaked in August, Gerard directed API's nearly 400 member companies to mobilize their employees to attend "Energy Citizen" rallies in 20 states to protest a cap on carbon pollution. To ensure the success of the fake grass-roots protests, Gerard bragged that he had also enlisted a bevy of polluting allies – including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. "Please treat this information as sensitive," Gerard cautioned in the memo. "We don't want critics to know our game plan."

This is not the first time that API has been at the center of a secretive campaign to derail carbon controls. In the late 1990s, the institute conspired with Exxon and a cadre of right-wing think tanks to create the "Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan" – an \$8 million effort to fund climate research that hypes the "weaknesses in scientific understanding" of global warming. "Victory will be achieved," the plan explained, when "those promoting the Kyoto treaty on the basis of extant science appear to be out of touch with reality."



FROM TOP: HARRY BORDEN/CORBIS OUTLINE; ENERGY TOMORROW



BURNING MAN

Rex Tillerson

CEO, ExxonMobil

TILLERSON, WHO OVERSEES THE world's biggest oil company, concedes that "greenhouse-gas emissions are one of the factors affecting climate change." But that doesn't mean that America's largest carbon polluter plans to stop killing the climate. Exxon is responsible for 397 million tons of CO₂ emissions annually – more than twice those of the nation's dirtiest electric utility – accounting for 6.5 percent of America's climate-warming pollution. As part of its campaign to defeat climate legislation, which Tillerson claims will "cap economic growth," Exxon spent \$29 million on lobbying in 2008 – second only to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. And despite vowing to stop its funding of climate denial, it continues to foot the bill for bogus research by right-

wing outfits like the Heritage Foundation, which asserts that "growing scientific evidence casts doubt on whether global warming constitutes such a threat."

In a disingenuous attempt to appear serious about the threat of climate change, Tillerson has recently begun to advocate a tax on carbon pollution – a measure he knows has absolutely no chance of passing. "It's strategic," says Emilie Mazzacurati, North American research chief for the energy analyst Point Carbon. "You're never going to pass a tax on carbon in this country; politically, it's completely impossible." Such duplicity is par for the course: In 2007, spending \$100 million on ads, Exxon boasted about its investments in renewable energy – even though such deals totaled only \$10 million that year.

THE DRUDGE OF DENIAL

Marc Morano

Founder, Climate Depot

MORANO, WHO WORKED FOR Sen. James "Global Warming is a Hoax" Inhofe, left Congress last year to set up shop as the Matt Drudge of climate denial. Today he runs Climate Depot, a website whose sponsor is funded by oil heir Richard Mellon Scaife. A private version of a congressional blog that Morano ran for Inhofe, the site serves as a clearinghouse for climate kooks. "He's a central cell of the climate-denial machine," says Kert Davies, research director for Greenpeace. "He's been very effective in delaying action on this crisis."

Morano says climate scientists are in the "fear-promoting business" and accuses them of waging a "war on modern civilization." But it's Morano who trafficks in wild claims, routinely distorting the work of climate scholars and charging that "proponents of man-made global warming have been funded to the tune of \$50 billion." A former producer for Rush Limbaugh, Morano gained fame as one of the first to trumpet Swift-boat lies about John Kerry's military record. Andrew Watson, a British climate professor who recently debated Morano on the BBC, said it best in a whispered aside at the end of the show: "What an asshole."



THE DIRTY DEMOCRAT

Sen. Mary Landrieu

Democrat, Louisiana

LANDRIEU – WHO BOASTS OF BEING "the most fervent pro-drilling Democrat in the Senate" – has assured oil interests that she'll be "putting the brakes" on current efforts to cap carbon pollution. Even though her home state will be savaged by climate change, Katrina-style, Landrieu routinely sides with her energy funders. In 2008, after providing the pivotal vote to preserve \$12 billion in tax breaks for Big Oil, she received \$272,000 from oil and gas interests – third among Democrats. Joined

by other Democrats from key energy states – including Jim Webb of Virginia, Max Baucus of Montana, Evan Bayh of Indiana and Robert Byrd of West Virginia – Landrieu tried to kill climate legislation in the Senate by requiring that it be passed by a 60-vote supermajority. "Landrieu acts more to protect Big Oil than the future for the people of Louisiana," says Tony Massaro of the League of Conservation Voters, which added Landrieu to its "Dirty Dozen" roster of pro-pollution politicians.





GOD'S DENIER

Sen. James Inhofe

Republican, Oklahoma

AS THE FORMER CHAIRMAN and ranking Republican of the Senate environment committee, Inhofe is one of the GOP's loudest and most influential voices on climate change. The senator from Oklahoma calls global warming "the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people," insists that carbon dioxide is not "a real pollutant," and doesn't worry about rising sea levels, because, if all else fails, "God's still up there."

Far from being marginalized, Inhofe continues to hold remarkable sway: In November, he organized fellow GOP members to boycott the environment committee's debate on climate legislation. He

also marshaled the ranking GOP members of all six committees with jurisdiction over climate change to write Sen. Barbara Boxer, warning her that proceeding without Republicans would "severely damage" prospects for the bill's passage. The move helped cloud the bill's future, diminishing America's bargaining position at the Copenhagen climate negotiations. "We won, you lost," Inhofe gloated to Boxer during a committee hearing. "Get a life."

In December, the senator also vowed that a resurgent GOP would block the EPA from curbing carbon pollution: "After the 2010 election," he said, "I guarantee we'll have the votes to do it."

THE POWER PLAYER

David Ratcliffe

CEO, Southern Company

RATCLIFFE, THE HEAD OF America's second-dirtiest electric utility, has assembled an army of 63 lobbyists – almost twice as many as any other company – to defeat climate legislation. It's a pro-carbon dream team, anchored by Jeffrey Holmstead of Rudy Giuliani's law firm, who worked on behalf of utilities like Southern as a top clean-air official under George W. Bush. The reason for the lobbying blitz: Southern burns a lot of coal – its largest plant produces more carbon pollution than all of Brazil's power plants combined – and new limits on emissions being considered by the Senate could cost the utility some \$400 million a year. That's why Ratcliffe continues to deny the reality of global warming: "I don't believe there's an impending catastrophe," he says, insisting that the environment will simply "adapt to changing realities."

"The value of his stock trumps everything," says Carl Pope, head of the Sierra Club. "It's hard to imagine a more cynical attitude. But no doubt he genuinely sees it that way – his bottom line is the measure of the world."



THE ARM TWISTER

Dick Gephardt

CEO, Gephardt Group

THE FORMER HOUSE MAJORITY leader now uses his considerable political clout as a lobbyist for Peabody Energy, the world's largest private-sector coal company. Working behind the scenes on Capitol Hill, Gephardt has emerged as the most credible proponent of "clean coal" – an imaginary technology being touted by the industry as an alternative to limits on carbon pollution. ("Clean coal is like healthy cigarettes," says Al Gore. "It does not exist.") In July, Gephardt was the keynote speaker at the Clean Coal Technology Conference, an honor bestowed after he

helped win \$1 billion in stimulus funding for FutureGen, a "clean coal" boondoggle promoted by Peabody. That's a significant return on the \$1.7 million that Peabody and the FutureGen Industrial Alliance have invested in Gephardt Group's services since 2007. His firm also lobbies for Ameren, the nation's fourth-dirtiest utility, as well as for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The head of Peabody's Washington office, Fred Palmer, marvels at the access the ex-congressman still enjoys on Capitol Hill: "I can meet with a lot of people, but I'm Fred Palmer. He's Dick Gephardt."





THE PUNDIT

George Will

Commentator, ABC

LEVERAGING HIS STATUS AS THE nation's most recognizable pundit, Will has become a one-man front for corporate-funded "science" that denies the existence of global warming. From his institutional perches at the *Washington Post*, *Newsweek* and ABC's *This Week*, Will preaches about the "indoctrination" of Americans by "environmental Cassandras" in the "media-entertainment-environmental complex" over a climate threat that is "hypothetical" and only "allegedly occurring." To buttress such wild-eyed denial, Will cherry-picks data points – or simply makes them up, as when he claimed in a recent column that "there has been no recorded global warming for more than a decade" and that "global sea-ice levels now equal those of 1979." Both assertions are flat-out wrong: Eleven of the warmest years on record have occurred in the past 13 years, and researchers have recorded a decrease in

global sea ice bigger than Texas and California combined.

Despite a rebuke from the *Post*'s ombudsman, the paper has refused to run any correction for Will's disinformation campaign. The pundit, meanwhile, continues to belch climate nonsense from behind his tortoise-shell spectacles, claiming that limiting carbon pollution would force developing nations to "sacrifice their modernization on the altar of climate change." He also accuses climate scientists – rather than big polluters – of perpetuating lies out of financial self-interest, citing what he calls the "enormous incentive to get on the bandwagon on global warming." "He positions himself as a conservative intellectual," says Joe Romm, a physicist who serves as a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. "But you can't be an intellectual and be anti-science. He's really just an ideologue masquerading as an intellectual."

THE KNOW NOTHING

Tom Donohue

President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

AS THE DE FACTO CHIEF OF American business and industry, Donohue has turned the biggest lobbying presence on Capitol Hill into the biggest friend of climate polluters. In the first nine months of last year, the Chamber spent \$65 million – three times more than Exxon-Mobil – mounting a campaign to block Congress from placing limits on carbon pollution. "Not only has the Chamber spent decades denying the existence of the climate crisis," Al Gore observed, "now it is dedicating a significant quantity of resources and money attempting to prevent Congress from taking action."

The extreme anti-climate position staked out by Donohue runs counter to the position of his own members. Of the 23 companies on the Chamber's board that made their position on climate legislation public, only four are against it – and three of those are coal companies. Yet the Chamber claims, in scaremongering language, that climate legislation threatens to "completely shut the country down" and "virtually destroy the United States." For his part, Donohue is proudly ignorant of the risks that a changing climate poses to the business community: "Is the science right? Is science not right? I don't know."

The know-nothing approach has proved too much for many leading companies to bear. Last summer, when the Chamber's senior vice president declared that "there is no evidence that CO₂ has an impact on health and welfare" and called for a "Scopes monkey trial of the 21st century" to put the "science of climate change on trial," even the California utility PG&E resigned from the Chamber, blasting Donohue for his group's "disingenuous attempts to distort" the dangers of climate change. Apple and Exelon joined the rush for the exit, and Nike resigned its place on the Chamber's board.





THE COAL BARON

Don Blankenship

CEO, Massey Energy

IN AN AGE WHEN MOST CEOs ARE canny enough to at least pay lip service to the realities of climate change, Blankenship stands apart as corporate America's most unabashed denier. Global warming, he insists, is nothing but "a hoax and a Ponzi scheme." His fortune depends on such lies: Massey Energy, the nation's fourth-largest coal-mining operation, unearths more than 40 million tons of the fossil fuel each year – often by blowing the tops off of Appalachian mountains.

The country's highest-paid coal executive, Blankenship is a villain ripped straight from the comic books: a jowly, mustache-sporting, union-busting coal baron who uses his fortune to bend politics to his will. He recently financed a \$3.5 million campaign to oust a state Supreme Court justice who frequently ruled against his company, and he hung out on the French Riviera with another judge who was weighing an appeal by Massey. "Don Blankenship would actu-

ally be less powerful if he were in elected office," Rep. Nick Rahall of West Virginia once observed. "He would be twice as accountable and half as feared."

On the national level, Blankenship enjoys a position of influence on the board of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which has led the fight to kill climate legislation. He enjoys inveighing against the "green-iacs" – including Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid and Al Gore – who are "taking over the world." And he has even taken to tweeting about climate change: "We must demand that more coal be burned to save the Earth from global cooling."

In more unguarded moments, however, Blankenship confesses that his over-the-top rhetoric is strategic. "If it weren't for guys like me," he says, "the middle would be further to the left." He also admits that his efforts to block climate legislation are ultimately self-serving: "It would probably cut our business in half."

THE HACK SCIENTIST

Fred Singer

Retired physicist,
University of Virginia

A FORMER MOUTHPIECE for the tobacco industry, the 85-year-old Singer is the granddaddy of fake "science" designed to debunk global warming. The retired physicist – who also tried to downplay the danger of the hole in the ozone layer – is still wheeled out as an authority by big polluters determined to kill climate legislation. For years, Singer steadfastly denied that the world is heating up: Citing satellite data that has since been discredited, he even made the unhinged claim that "the climate has been cooling just slightly." Last year, Singer served as a lead author of "Climate Change Reconsidered" – an 880-page report by the right-wing Heartland Institute that was laughably presented as a counterweight to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's scientific authority on global warming. Singer concludes that the unchecked growth of climate-cooking pollution is "unequivocally good news." Why? Because "rising CO₂ levels increase plant growth and make plants more resistant to drought and pests." Small wonder that Heartland's climate work has long been funded by the likes of Exxon and reactionary energy barons like Charles Koch and Richard Mellon Scaife.



FROM TOP: CHIP ELLIS/CHARLESTON GAZETTE; MARTIN GNEIDT/AP IMAGES

THE INQUISITOR

Rep. Joe Barton

Republican, Texas

AS RANKING REPUBLICAN on the House energy committee, Barton is a mini version of Sen. James Inhofe. In his view, the climate is changing for “natural variation reasons,” and humans should just “get shade” and learn to adapt. “For us to try to step in and say we have got to do all these global things to prevent the Earth from getting any warmer is absolute nonsense,” he insists. “You can’t regulate God.”

During the Bush era, Barton bottled up all climate legislation and pushed to open up public lands for drilling by private interests. He also targeted leading climate scientists, demanding that they provide Congress with detailed documentation of their financial interests. (Barton himself has received \$1.4 million from oil and gas donors, plus \$1.3 million from electric utilities.) The inquisition drew sharp rebukes, even from Barton’s fellow Republicans. Your “purpose seems to be to intimidate scientists rather than to learn from them,” then-Rep. Sherwood Boehlert told Barton. The effort “to have Congress put its thumbs on the scales of a scientific debate” is “truly chilling.”



THE FLIP FLOPPER

Sen. John McCain

Republican, Arizona

MCCAIN HAS BEEN ONE OF THE Senate’s biggest climate champions since 2003, when he introduced a bill with Joe Lieberman to create a “cap and trade” system similar to the one currently being debated. But since losing the presidency to Barack Obama, McCain is taking his pique out on the planet. He’s now threatening to roadblock the very measure he once introduced, lying about its cost and distorting its goals. “What the Obama administration has proposed is not cap-and-trade,” McCain says. “It’s cap-and-tax.” He’s even trash-talking a bipartisan alternative by GOP colleague Lindsey Graham, calling it “horrendous.”

Although McCain frames his newfound stance as opposition to what he portrays as a \$630 billion tax on corporate America, the measure as revised by the House actually provides the energy industry with more than \$690 billion in pollution subsidies. McCain’s about-face may have more to do with his precarious electoral future: The senator is currently locked in a dead heat with likely primary challenger J.D. Hayworth, a knuckle-dragging former congressman. The one-time “maverick” now earns high praise from the far right: “He’s been a fabulous team player,” says Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. “On message and effective.”



THE TEA PARTIERS

Charles and David Koch

CEO and Executive Vice President, Koch Industries

THE MULTIBILLIONAIRE BROTHERS not only run the nation’s largest private energy company, they rival Exxon in funding the front groups that spread disinformation about the dangers of climate change. Over the years, the Kochs and their foundations have lavished millions on climate deniers at the Heritage Foundation, the Competitive Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute, which Charles founded in 1977. Cato, in turn, supports the work of Patrick Michaels, a leading climate denier who attempts to discredit the international scientific consensus on global warming while accepting

money from coal companies. As author Thomas Frank observes in *What’s the Matter With Kansas?*, “Koch money subsidizes the mass production of bad ideas.”

One major recipient of Koch cash is Americans for Prosperity, where David chairs the foundation’s board. In addition to fomenting last summer’s town-hall brawls over health care reform, AFP sponsored a “Hot Air Tour” on climate change, deploying a manned balloon at 75 events for the purpose of “Exposing the Ballooning Costs of Global Warming Hysteria.” At the events, the group’s president, Tim Phillips, grossly exaggerated the costs of

climate legislation, calling it a trillion-dollar tax on American families.

Last October, at an AFP summit attended by David Koch, the assembled Tea Partiers screened a climate-denial film that accused advocates like Al Gore of wanting to take civilization “back to the Dark Ages and the Black Plague.” Such events, Koch proclaimed, “bring to reality the vision” of “fighting for the economic freedoms that made our nation the most prosperous society in history.” Last year, seeking to defend its own prosperity against a carbon-capped future, Koch Industries spent more than \$8.5 million on lobbying.



SUNSHINE SUPERMAN

The psychedelic wisdom and supremely strange sounds of Devendra Banhart, high priest of the new L.A. scene

BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

Photograph by Lauren Dukoff

ON A WARM WINTER AFTERNOON IN THE LOS FELIZ hills of East Los Angeles, Devendra Banhart is flitting around his new house, a Seventies-style saltbox once inhabited by Graham Nash. He's fairylike, a rail-thin five feet 11 and 130 pounds, with an elegant, small-boned face, liquid brown eyes and thin-line tattoos splashed across various extremities, including a wriggling serpent etched on each foot – “the bifurcated path that leads to one place,” he explains (more on this later). Banhart doesn't have a car at the moment, because he gave away his biodiesel Mercedes to a friend, and he's just hoofed it back from lunch with the raven-haired singer of a local band, West Indian Girl. It seems like the two of them are together, but he shakes his head. “I feel like an old lady, like the artist



Agnes Martin, who I heard was celibate her whole life," he says. "She was like, 'In my last life, I probably did a lot of boning, so this time I'm focusing on my artwork.'"

For most of this decade, Banhart has been considered the leader of the "freak folk" scene, an amorphous collection of earthy bands and singers like Joanna Newsom, Vetiver and Animal Collective. Banhart plays both the shaman and the idiot savant, a bushy-bearded sex symbol of new-school hippiedom who once dated Natalie Portman. But recently he's gathered a new group of musicians around him – from Beck to the Strokes' Fabrizio Moretti and Julian Casablancas – who have created a kind of proto-Gotham in the eucalyptus-scented hills east of Hollywood.

What Will We Be, Banhart's latest album, ranges from Led Zeppelin caterwauls to a ballad in the lost language of California's Pit River Indians. It's also Banhart's most well-crafted rock record yet: Over six albums, Banhart has moved away from collections of warbling free-form ditties about spiders and reincarnation toward shorter, sharper songs. "Devendra has grown more patient," says his drummer, Greg Rogove. "The early recordings were very extemporaneous, but now he takes some time with lyrics and works on structure with the band."

That's not to say that Banhart isn't still a hippie – he just wants to be very clear that he's not the cartoon version of one, a space case making tinctures and baking bread. In fact, the thought that he might be clas-

out of this – but alone, sorry. You should've seen me a minute ago! I just smoked some hydro kush, man. It was sick."

Then he shifts uneasily in a chair.

"You know, the last show we played in L.A., we had all electric instruments, and I played a fucking keyboard, but the reviews said, 'They brought their brand of folk music to the House of Blues.' I thought that was amazing. Wow." He covers his eyes with one hand. "What do I have to do to not be that guy?"



AT HIS CORE, BANHART IS AN urban aesthete, an art-school kid and street skater influenced by the Incredible String Band, Tropicália and the Fugs. He's also the son of a fashion model from Caracas, Venezuela, who was such a free spirit that she'd pull stunts like peeing next to the car when dropping him off at school. "I was mortified," he says. "What if someone sees my mom's vagina pissing in the street?" A conversation with him can be like picking through his garbage can, looking for scraps of paper on which he's scribbled some thoughts. In the course of five minutes, he will careen from whispered excitement about Harmony Korine's forthcoming film *Trash Humpers* to reciting a William Blake poem to admiration for R. Kelly ("Somehow his music is so good, I like to imagine the little girl said, 'Please pee on me'"). He says that *What Will We Be* is inspired by tissue. "I was blowing my nose on some Kleenex, and

chuckles. "In retrospect, Bonnaroo is not a bad place to be roofied, because they are gentle and kind, those mountain-lovers."

Banhart was born in Texas in 1981; when he was a toddler, he says, his father was sent to prison for five years (he declines to elaborate on the charges, only saying that the crime was not violent). His first name was bestowed by Prem Rawat, an Indian guru popular in the Seventies; his middle name, Obi, was divined when his mother saw Alec Guinness come onscreen in *Star Wars* while her son was kicking in the womb. "Prem Rawat teaches what Jesus says, essentially, that the kingdom of heaven is within," Banhart says. "The only rule is that the women choose their mates, and the men are only allowed to be castrated on Thursdays. And then of course there's the triple-circumcision thing, which means you sew open the tip. . . ."

After his parents split up, Banhart's mom high-tailed it back to Caracas, where she looked for work as a nutritionist while, he says, trying to ensnare a guy to support them. They were middle-class, at least by the standards of a highly corrupt South American city. "One end of the city is toilet-paper shanties, and the other is fecundate, glorious, verdant majesty, but three families own that part, and they live in Malibu," says Banhart. "I think I appreciate nature so much because that part stood above us constantly, this beautiful place, this powerful thing." A telecommunications expert who traveled the world for

"People are always giving me weed," Banhart says. "I don't want to let them down, so I'm like, 'I'm going to go smoke this – but alone.'"

sified that way in pop culture makes him "snowball into an avalanche of self-aware insecurity and terror," he says. "I'd like to apologize to the hippies for being considered someone who can speak on their behalf," he adds, spacing out his words so they come off as a little ironic, though he isn't joking in the slightest. "I don't wear patchouli, and I smell too good to be a hippie." He shudders at the mention of yoga and thinks that macrobiotic food is "the most insipid shit ever," an opinion forged as a busboy at Angelica Kitchen in New York, "cleaning carrot-ginger dressing off the plates of the most neurotic human beings on the planet." He doesn't even smoke pot: "Unless, you know, *Pootie Tang* or *White Chicks* is on." He lets out a light laugh. "People are always giving me weed after shows, and I don't want to let them down, so I'm like, I'm going to go smoke the shit

I thought, 'This used to be a tree.' So I told the tree in the past, 'Thanks for letting me blow my nose on your future.' I don't know if the tree knew it was going to be Kleenex, but maybe it did. It could exist in the fourth dimension, where time is one line."

This is all good-natured babble, because Banhart – while also being a fragile, nervous fellow – is the nicest person you'll ever meet, gracious, generous and deeply kind. "Devendra is a very Ginsberg-ian character, in that Allen gave away everything he had over and over, and a whole group did good work because of him," says Jay Babcock, editor of L.A. psychedelia magazine *Arthur*. Banhart is sunshiny and charismatic, even smiling as he tells a story about getting unwittingly dosed at Bonnaroo in 2007. "Halfway through the set, I rhymed 'hot' with 'pot,' and then I realized something was wrong," he says. "A golf cart came to take me away while I yelled out, 'Orphan limbs!' I woke up in a bed with a Subway sandwich near my head." He

business took over as his father, toting back CDs for the kid from across the globe, like Ali Farka Toure and Fela Kuti. "None of my friends' parents were listening to this kind of stuff," says Banhart. "I felt it was very exotic, this esoteric knowledge."

In 1994, when Banhart was 13, his stepfather scraped together enough cash to take the family out of Hugo Chávez's revolution and move them to California, where they settled into a guesthouse near Malibu. "I think he saved my life, and saved my mom's life," Banhart says of his stepdad. "My pop is the most important person in my life." But Banhart was shocked by what he found when he enrolled in Malibu High. "In Caracas, I was watching your movies, and they were documentaries to me," he says. "'Cool, *The Lost Boys*, isn't that how it is? Corey Haim!" He shakes his head. "This was America, the most fetishized, idolized country in the world, and the kids in Malibu were rich, living in mansions – yet they were totally racist, close-minded,

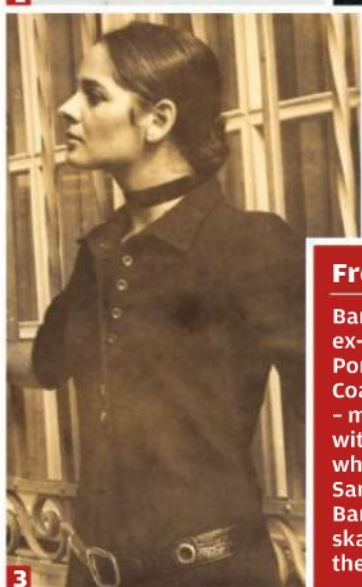
VANESSA GRIGORIADIS wrote the Shakira cover story for RS 1091.



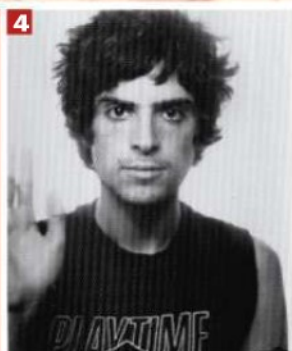
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Freaky Stylez

Banhart - with ex-girlfriend Natalie Portman (1) and at Coachella in 2009 (2) - moved to Venezuela with his mother (3) when he was four. At Santa Monica High (4), Banhart took up skateboarding and the guitar.

uncultured hicks who acted like gangsters because Snoop Dogg just came out," he says. Were they racist to him? "Are you kidding me?" he asks, eyes blazing. "Are you taking a shit in my mouth?"

Alienated and confused - and already pretty "artsy-fartsy," he says - he decided to conduct a social experiment over the course of one week. On Monday, he wore a suit. "The kids were like, 'That's kind of weird. *Men in Black!*' I thought, 'Oh, that's the reaction, interesting.'" The next day, he put on baggy jeans and Timberlands, slicked back his hair and affixed a pearl earring to his left ear. "Dudes that hated me were like, 'Sup, dawg?'" he says. "Girls who never talked to me: 'Hey, who's that guy?'" The next day, he wore a basketball uniform and gave himself a fake tribal tattoo; after that, he cut open the inseams of his black jeans, painted his legs red and drew all over his shirt. On Friday, the climax: a frilly dress. "I've never been so nervous in my life," he says. "Kids wanted to

beat me up: 'Where's that superfag? Let's get him!' It was very scary."

He transferred to Santa Monica High and started skateboarding on the famed Santa Monica Courthouse steps. "I got really into the music on skate videos, like [legendary skater] Steve Olson used 'Quick-sand' from *Hunky Dory*, by David Bowie," says Banhart. (He recently shot his own skate video.) He picked up the guitar and hung out on the beach promenade at mom-and-pop record stores soaking up music. "Blues wasn't something a major label was trying to sell with shitty-ass production - it was Mississippi John Hurt, and it really got to me," he says. "Or I'd get a ska compilation with the Skatalites, Alton Ellis and Horace Andy. All these dudes, I'd just go from one to the next, finding out who they were."

After high school, Banhart landed an art-school scholarship but dropped out two years later, after a letter from his biological father. (They rarely speak to each other these days.) "I've never met anybody

on my biological father's side other than him," Banhart says. "I just found out my grandmother's name last year." His father wanted to make things right, buying Banhart an airplane ticket to anywhere in the world. Banhart, who had begun recording demos, chose Paris, in hopes that all the girls would look like Jean Seberg in *Breathless*. He brought \$600 and a borrowed four-track recorder. When he ran out of money, he stood outside a Sonic Youth concert to find someone who would let him crash on a couch; after he outstayed too many welcomes, he began sleeping in the subway. Then, he heard that Vashti Bunyan's 1970 psychedelic-folk classic *Just Another Diamond Day* was going to be reissued on CD for the first time. He put it in his Discman for a month. "When I was hungry and didn't have food, or was tired and couldn't sleep, I was happy because I was listening to that record," he says. "It changed my life."

Banhart returned to California and after an encouraging letter from Young God Records in Brooklyn, boarded a plane for New York with another \$600 and his guitar. "In my head, I was going to be Lou Reed, a sea urchin in the sewers," he says. The reality was an expensive city in which he knew no one. At an underground music festival, he repeated his Paris act, asking around for an apartment he could cook at or clean in return for shelter. The best offer was a squat in an abandoned salsa club in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. "It had a toilet that you had to fill up with the sink to flush and a room in the back covered with all sorts of horrible graffiti," he says. "It was very scary." The brightness drains from his face. "When you're homeless, no one gives a fuck about you. When you don't have a single dollar, no one gives a fuck about you. That gesture of 'Play me a song. That was nice. You want to stay on the couch?' That's what was saving my life. A bit of kindness."

As a companion, he bought a mouse he named Mr. Journey. "It was lonely; he was two bucks," says Banhart. He made a cardboard box for Mr. Journey and gave him a thimble of whiskey. "He wasn't into me, though," he says. "I eventually let him go."

Young God signed Banhart a few months later, and since then, he's toured more or less constantly and watched his audience grow from record-collector dudes who would rag on him for not being a folk purist, to everyone from the Black Crowes' Chris Robinson and Karl Lagerfeld. But he's still living for that little bit of kindness. "It's important to find something magical, beautiful and spiritual in everything," he says. "And I know I'm sounding like a hippie right now, but I am interested artistically in things that are imbued with a mystical sense to them. That's the vein and bane of my life, what I'm attracted to and move toward."

It's a couple of weeks later, and we're sitting in his house again as [Cont. on 63]

CLOSE-UP

Beck's French Connection

I CAN'T COMPOSE MUSIC OR WRITE LYRICS, and I'm not a trained musician," says French actor and singer Charlotte Gainsbourg, smoking a cigarette at Hollywood's Sunset Sound studios. "The evolution of making an album is a mystery." But when you're the daughter of French cultural icon Serge Gainsbourg and actress Jane Birkin – and the star of films by Michel Gondry and Lars von Trier – getting international cool-hunters to help you translate your certain *je ne sais quoi* into an album of 13 songs is about as easy as lighting a smoke. For her 2006 set, *5:55*, the 38-year-old worked with Jarvis Cocker and Air; on the upcoming *IRM* (the title is French for "MRI"; Gainsbourg suffered a brain aneurysm in 2007), she roped in Beck, who produced, co-wrote and performed on the entire record. "Without

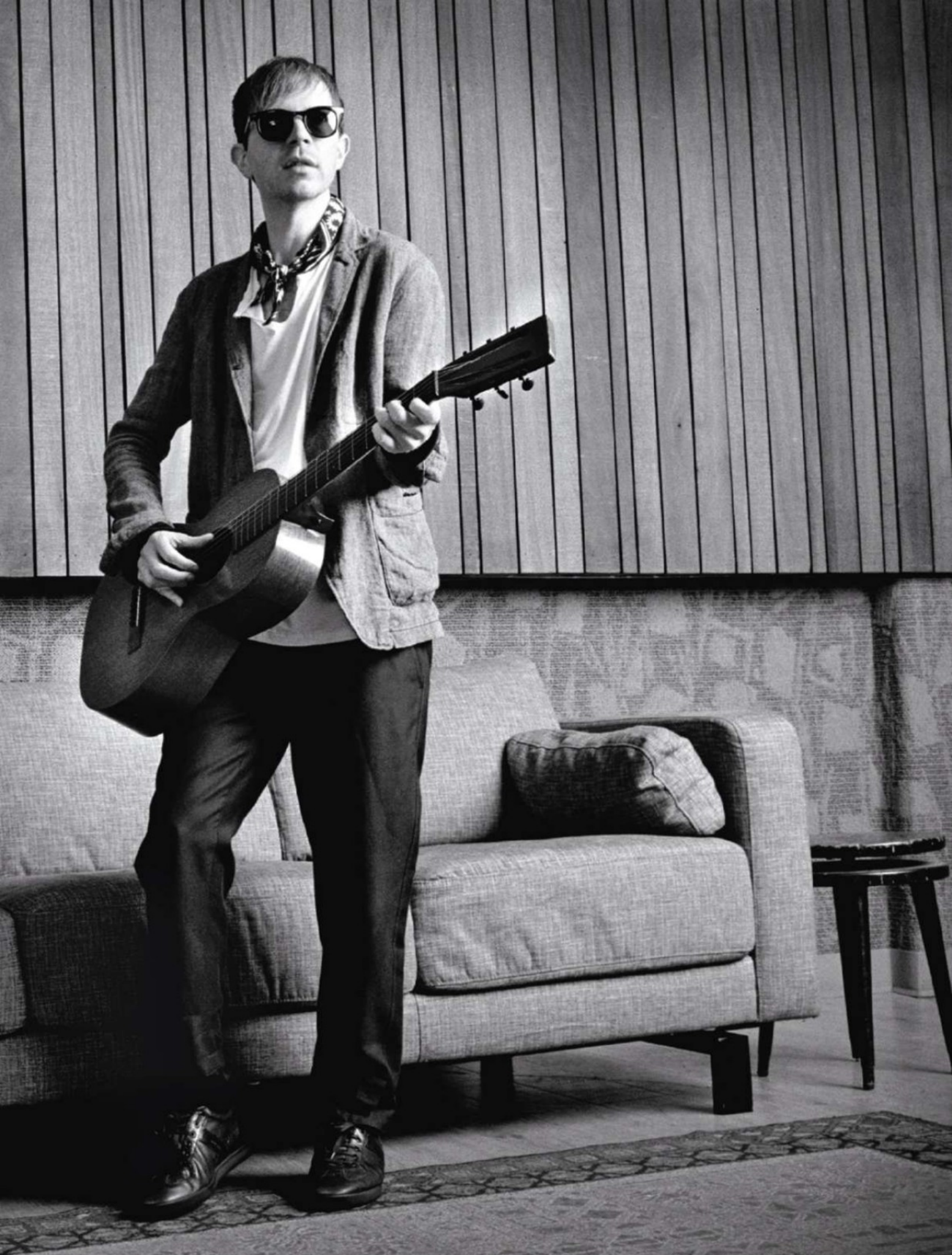
really talking about it, things just happened," she says. "By the time we went into the studio, he'd prepared tons of stuff." Must be nice.

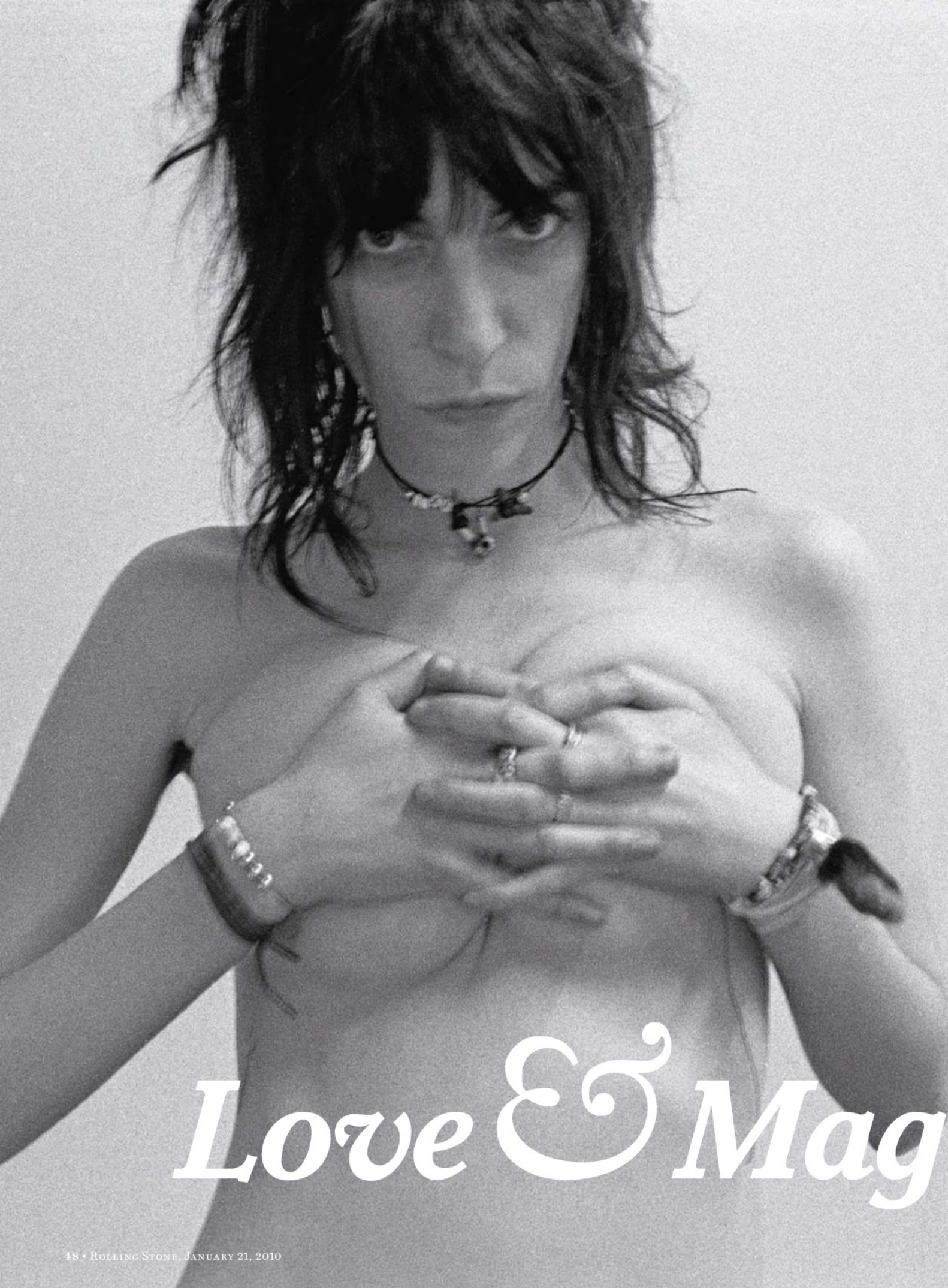
Recording in L.A. during breaks between films (hers) and albums (his), the two crafted a disc that casually mixes French and English, and leaps between elegant, atmospheric pop ("Le Chat du Café des Artistes") and sleazy blues rock ("Trick Pony"). Beck counts Captain Beefheart and proto-country singer Jimmie Rodgers as big influences on the LP. "In my world, the 1930s still feels contemporary," he says. "That feels more current and valid to me than new music." As for Gainsbourg's singing – breathy, ethereal, half-sung, half-spoken – it's not something she needs to think about. "I always go back to my father," she says. "It's just something I do." **MATT DIEHL**

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM JONES

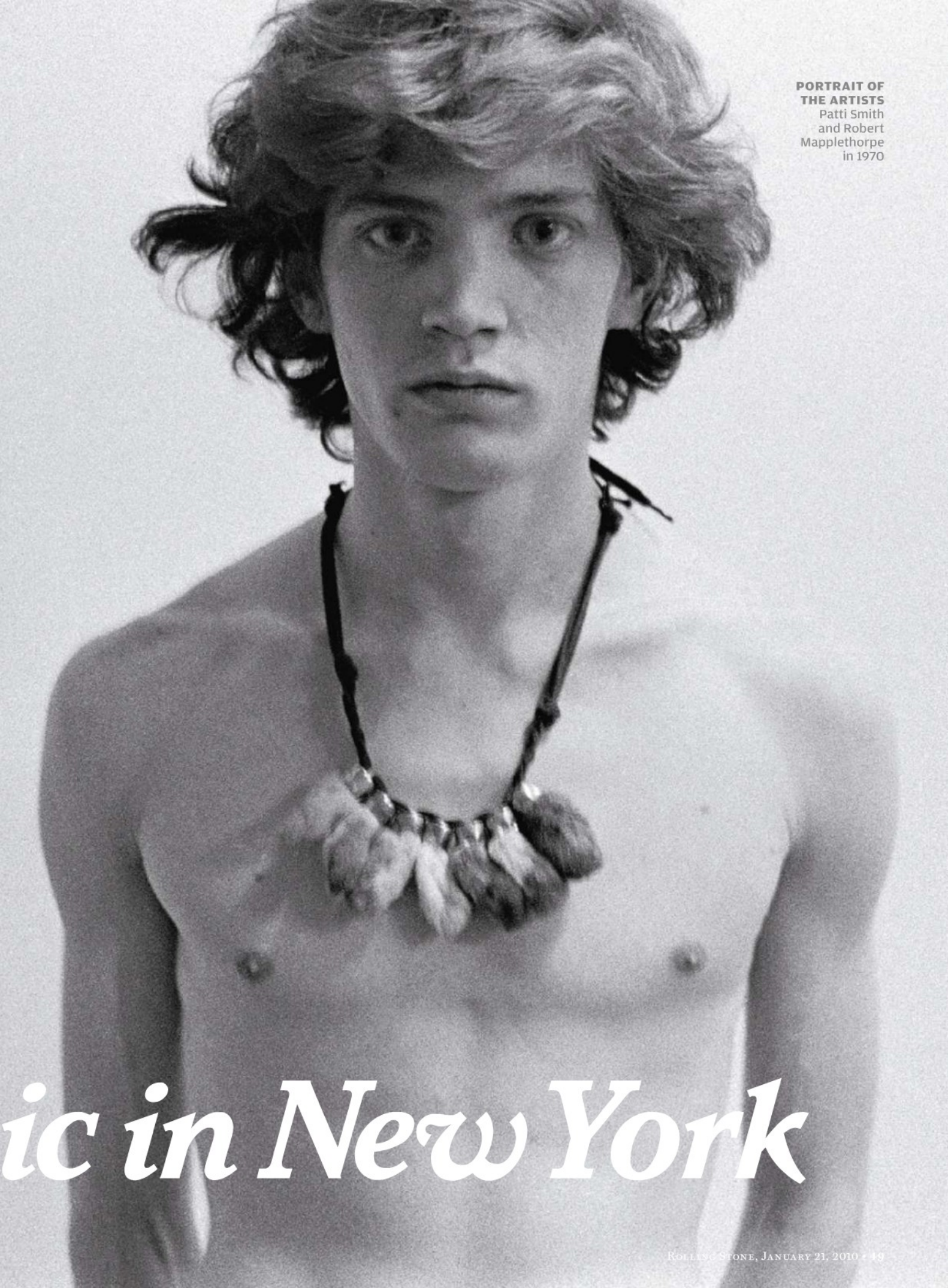


THE COOL KIDS
Gainsbourg and Beck
at Hollywood's Sunset
Sound studios in July





Love & Mag

A black and white portrait of a young man with curly hair, looking directly at the camera. He is shirtless and wearing a necklace made of dark cord and several large, light-colored, shell-like pendants. The background is a plain, light color.

**PORTRAIT OF
THE ARTISTS**
Patti Smith
and Robert
Mapplethorpe
in 1970

ic in New York

On July 3rd, 1967, Patti Smith – then 20 years old, a teachers-college dropout from New Jersey with shotgun passions for rock & roll and the French poet Arthur Rimbaud – boarded a bus in Philadelphia and, a couple of hours later, got off in New York to start life anew. “No one expected me,” she says in a new memoir, *“Just Kids.”* “Everything awaited me.” That included Robert Mapplethorpe, also 20, a former altar boy and an aspiring artist from Long Island. Smith met him that first day in New York, at an apartment in Brooklyn, and again later at a bookstore where she worked. Those encounters bloomed into one of New York’s great love stories, a romantic, spiritual and creative bond that Smith recounts in vivid detail for the first time in *“Just Kids.”* For five years, Smith and Mapplethorpe lived together, supported each other in illness and discovery (including his emerging homosexuality) and urged each other to new adventures in expression: Smith in her poetry, visual art and songwriting; Mapplethorpe in his stark, exquisite photography and sexually provocative portraiture. Their combined ambitions and ideals would culminate in Mapplethorpe’s iconic cover photo for Smith’s 1975 debut album, *“Horses.”* Smith recalls a conversation shortly before his death from AIDS in 1989: “We never had any children,” he said ruefully. Smith, by then the mother of two, replied, “Our work was our children.”

FOR MY 21ST BIRTHDAY, Robert made me a tambourine, tattooing the goatskin with astrological signs and tying multicolored ribbons to its base. He put on Tim Buckley singing “Phantasmagoria in Two,” then he knelt down and handed me a small book on the tarot that he had rebound in black silk. Inside it he inscribed a few lines of poetry, portraying us as the gypsy and the fool, one creating silence, one listening closely to the silence. In the clanging swirl of our lives, these roles would reverse many times.

The following night was New Year’s Eve, our first together. We made new vows. Robert decided he would apply for a student loan and return to Pratt, not to study commercial art as his father wished, but to devote his energies to art alone. He wrote me a note to say we would create art together and we would make it, with or without the rest of the world.

It was going to be a hard winter. Robert was depressed working full-time at FAO Schwarz. Working as a window trimmer sparked his imagination and he made installation sketches. But he did less and less drawing. We lived on day-old bread and Dinty Moore beef stew. We hadn’t the money to go anywhere, had no television, telephone or radio. We had our record player, though, and drew back the arm so a chosen record would play over and over as we slept.

I needed to get another job. My friend Janet Hamill had been hired at Scribner’s Bookstore, and she found a way of giving me a helping hand by sharing her good fortune. She spoke to her superiors, and they offered me a position. It seemed like a dream job, working in the retail store of the prestigious publisher, home to writers like Hemingway and Fitzgerald,

and their editor, the great Maxwell Perkins. Where the Rothschilds bought their books, where paintings by Maxfield Parrish hung in the stairwell.

Scribner’s was housed in a beautiful landmark building at 597 Fifth Avenue. The glass-fronted Beaux Arts-style exterior had been designed by Ernest Flagg in 1913. There was a two-and-a-half-story space behind a lavish expanse of glass and iron, under a vaulted ceiling lined with clerestory windows. Each day I rose, dutifully dressed and made the three subway changes to Rockefeller Center. My uniform for Scribner’s was taken from Anna Karina in *Bande à part*: dark sweater, plaid skirt, black tights and flats. I was positioned at the phone desk, which was manned by the kindhearted and supportive Faith Cross. I felt lucky to be associated with such a historic bookstore. My salary was higher, and I had Janet as a confidante. I was rarely bored, and when I got restless, I wrote on the back of Scribner’s stationery, like Tom in *The Glass Menagerie*, scribbling poems on the inside of cardboard boxes.

Robert was increasingly despondent. The hours were long. When he came home he was exhausted and dispirited and for a time stopped creating.

I implored him to quit. His job and scant paycheck were not worth the sacrifice. After nights of discussion, he reluctantly agreed. In return, he worked diligently, always anxious to show me what he had accomplished while I was at Scribner’s. I had no regrets taking on the job as breadwinner. My temperament was sturdier. I could still create at night, and I was proud to provide a situation allowing him to do his work without compromise.

At night, after trudging through the snow, I found him waiting for me in our apartment, ready to rub my hands to make them warm. He seemed always in motion, heating water on the stove, unlacing my boots, hanging up my coat, always with one eye on the drawing he was working on. He would stop for a moment if he noticed something. Most of the time, it seemed as if the piece was fully formed in his mind.

He was not one for improvising. It was more a question of executing something he saw in a flash.

Existing in silence all day, he was eager to hear my stories of the bookstore’s eccentric customers, of Edward Gorey with his big tennis shoes or Katharine Hepburn wearing Spencer Tracy’s cap covered with a green silk head scarf or the Rothschilds with their long black coats. Afterward, we would sit on the floor and eat spaghetti while examining his work. I was attracted to Robert’s work because his visual vocabulary was akin to my poetic one, even if we seemed to be moving toward different destinations. Robert always would tell me, “Nothing is finished until you see it.”

OUR FIRST WINTER TOGETHER was a harsh one. Even with my better salary from Scribner’s, we had very little money. Often we’d stand in the cold on the corner of St. James Place in eyeshot of the Greek diner and Jake’s art supply store, debating how to spend our few dollars – a toss-up between grilled cheese sandwiches and art supplies. Sometimes, unable to distinguish the greater hunger, Robert would keep nervous watch in the diner while I, filled with the spirit of Genet, pocketed the much-needed brass sharpener or colored pencils. I had a more romantic view of the artist’s life and sacrifices. I had once read that Lee Krasner had lifted art supplies for Jackson Pollock. I don’t know if it was true, but it served as inspiration. Robert fretted over not being able to provide for us. I told him not to worry, that committing to great art is its own reward.

At night we played the records we liked to draw to on our battered player. Sometimes we played a game called Record of the Night. The album cover of the chosen record would be prominently displayed on the mantel, the music informing the trajectory of the evening.

It did not bother me to work in obscurity. I was hardly more than a student. Yet Robert, though shy, nonverbal and seemingly out of step with those around him,

From the forthcoming book “Just Kids,” by Patti Smith. Copyright © 2010. To be published on January 19th by Ecco, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.



*"When I was 21, Robert wrote me a note:
He said we'd create art together and we would make it,
with or without the rest of the world."*

**NEW YORK
UNDERGROUND**
Smith in 1971, four
years after she
moved to Manhattan

was very ambitious. He held Duchamp and Warhol as models. High art and high society; he aspired to them both. We were a curious mix of *Funny Face* and Faust.

One cannot imagine the mutual happiness we felt when we sat and drew together. We would get lost for hours. His ability to concentrate for long periods infected me, and I learned by his example, working side by side. When we would take a break, I would boil water and make some Nescafé.

After a particularly good stretch of work, we would stroll along Myrtle Avenue, searching for Mallomars, splurging on Robert's favorite treat, a marshmallow cookie covered in dark chocolate. Although we spent most of our time together, we weren't isolated.

Our friends would come to visit. Harvey Parks and Louis Delsarte were painters; sometimes they worked on the floor next to us. Louis did portraits of us both, Robert with an Indian necklace and one of me with closed eyes. Ed Hansen shared his wisdom and collages, and Janet Hamill read us her poems. I would show my drawings and tell stories about them, like Wendy entertaining the lost children of Neverland. We were a crew of misfits, even within the liberal terrain of an art school. We often joked that we were a "losers' salon."

On special nights, Harvey, Louis and Robert would share a joint and play hand drums. Robert had his own set of tablas. And they accompanied themselves by reciting from Timothy Leary's *Psychedelic Prayers*, one of the few books Robert actually read. Occasionally I would read their cards, deriving meanings from a mix of Papus and my own intuition. These were nights like none I had experienced in South Jersey, whimsical and filled with love.

A new friend entered my life. Robert introduced me to Judy Linn, a fellow graphics student, and we liked each other right away. She was pretty and intelligent with an offbeat sense of humor, like a young Ida Lupino. She eventually pursued photography, spending years perfecting her dark-room techniques. In time I became her subject and she produced some of the earliest images of Robert and me.

On Valentine's Day, Robert gave me an amethyst geode. It was pale violet and nearly the size of a half grapefruit. He submerged it in water and we looked at the glowing crystals. When I was a kid I had dreamed of being a geologist. I recounted how I spent hours looking for rock specimens, wearing an old hammer tied around my waist. "No, Patti, no," he laughed.

My gift to him was an ivory heart with a cross carved in the center. Something in this object provoked a rare childhood tale from him, and he told me how he and the other altar boys would secretly rummage through the priests' private closet and drink the vestment wine. The wine didn't

interest him; it was the funny feeling in his stomach that excited him, the thrill of doing something forbidden.

In the beginning of March, Robert got a temp job as an usher for the newly opened Fillmore East. He reported for duty in an orange jumpsuit. He was looking forward to seeing Tim Buckley. But when he came home he was more excited by someone else. "I saw someone who's going to be really big," he said. It was Janis Joplin.

We didn't have the money to go to concerts, but before Robert left the Fillmore he got me a pass to see the Doors. I had a strange reaction watching Jim Morrison. Everyone around me seemed transfixed, but I observed his every move in a state of cold hyperawareness. I remember this feeling much more clearly than the concert. I felt, watching Jim Morrison, that I could do that. I can't say why I thought this.



JERSEY GIRL

Smith as a senior at Deptford Township High School, 1964. She dropped out of a teachers college before hitting New York.

I had nothing in my experience to make me think that would ever be possible, yet I harbored that conceit. I felt both kinship and contempt for him. I could feel his self-consciousness as well as his supreme confidence. He exuded a mixture of beauty and self-loathing, and mystic pain, like a West Coast Saint Sebastian. When anyone asked how the Doors were, I just said they were great. I was somewhat ashamed of how I had responded to their concert.

IT WAS THE SUNDAY BEFORE Thanksgiving. We had moved into the Chelsea Hotel. Though autumn was ending, it was a bright Indian-summer kind of day. I had gathered our laundry, slipped on an old cotton dress, stockings and a sweater, and headed toward Eighth Avenue. I put the stuff in the washer with a fair amount of baking soda and walked the couple of blocks to Asia de Cuba to get a *café con leche*.

I folded our things. The song we called ours came on, Tim Hardin's "How Can We Hang on to a Dream." We were both dreamers, but Robert was the one who got things done. I made the money, but he had drive and focus. He had plans for himself but for me as well. He wanted us to develop our work, but there was no room. All the wall space was taken. There was no possibility for him to realize his installations. His spray painting was bad for my persistent cough. He sometimes went up on the Chelsea roof but it was getting too cold. Finally he decided he was going to find a raw space for us, and began looking through *The Village Voice* and asking around.

Then he had a piece of luck. We had a neighbor, an overweight sad sack in a rumpled overcoat, who walked his French bulldog back and forth on 23rd Street. He and his dog had identical faces of slack folding skin. We coded him Pigman. Robert noticed he lived a few doors down, over the Oasis Bar. One evening he stopped to pet the dog and struck up a conversation. Robert asked him if he knew of any vacancies in his building, and Pigman told him he had the whole second floor but the front room was just for storage. Robert asked if he could sublet it. At first he was reluctant, but the dog liked Robert and he agreed, offering the front room starting January 1st for \$100 a month. Robert wasn't sure where the money would come from but sealed it with a handshake.

Robert took me over to see the space. There were floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking 23rd Street, and we could see the YMCA and the top of the Oasis sign. It was everything he needed: at least three times the size of our room with plenty of light and a wall with about a hundred nails protruding. "We can hang the necklaces there," he said.

"We?"

"Of course," he said. "You can work here too. It will be our space. You can start drawing again."

"The first drawing will be of Pigman," I said. "We owe him a lot. And don't worry about the money. We'll get it."

Not long after, I found a 26-volume set of the complete Henry James for next to nothing. It was in perfect condition. I knew a customer at Scribner's who would want it. I cleared over \$100. Slipping five \$20 bills in a sock, I tied a ribbon around it and gave it to Robert. He opened it, saying, "I don't know how you do it."

Robert gave the money to Pigman, and set to cleaning out the front half of the loft. It was a big job. I would stop in after work and he would be standing knee-deep in the center of Pigman's incomprehensible debris: dusty fluorescent tubing, rolls of insulation, racks of expired canned goods, half-empty bottles of unidentified cleaning fluids, vacuum cleaner bags, stacks of bent Venetian blinds, moldy boxes spilling over with decades of tax forms, and

bundles of stained *National Geographics* tied with red-and-white string, which I snapped up to braid for bracelets.

He cleared, scrubbed and painted the space. We borrowed buckets from the hotel, filled them with water and carted them over. When we were finished, we stood together in silence, imagining the possibilities. We'd never had so much light. We scavenged for a mattress, worktables and chairs. I mopped the floor with water boiled with eucalyptus on our hot plate.

The first things Robert brought over from the Chelsea were our portfolios.

THINGS WERE PICKING UP AT Max's Kansas City. I stopped being so judgmental and got in the swing of things. Somehow I was accepted, though I never really fit in. Christmas was coming and there was a pervasive melancholy, as if everyone simultaneously remembered they had nowhere to go.

Even here, in the land of the so-called drag queens, Wayne County, Holly Wood-

and Jackie had the delivery. Both of them were ahead of their time, but they didn't live long enough to see the time they were ahead of.

"Pioneers without a frontier," as Andy Warhol would say.

IT SNOWED ON CHRISTMAS night. We walked to Times Square to see the white billboard proclaiming WAR IS OVER! IF YOU WANT IT. HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM JOHN AND YOKO. It hung above the bookstall where Robert bought most of his men's magazines, between Child's and Benedict's, two all-night diners.

Looking up, we were struck by the ingenuous humanity of this New York City tableau. Robert took my hand, and as the snow swirled around us I glanced at his face. He narrowed his eyes and nodded in affirmation, impressed to see artists take on 42nd Street. For me it was the message. For Robert, the medium.

Newly inspired, we walked back to 23rd Street to look at our space. We stood at the

by storytellers like Blind Willie McTell and Hank Williams.

On June 5th, 1970, he took me to the Fillmore East to see Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. It was really not my kind of band, but I was moved to see Neil Young, since his song "Ohio" had made a great impression on me. It seemed to crystallize the role of the artist as a responsible commentator, as it paid homage to the four young Kent State students who lost their lives in the name of peace.

Afterward we drove up to Woodstock, where the Band was recording *Stage Fright*. Todd Rundgren was the engineer. Robbie Robertson was hard at work, concentrating on the song "Medicine Man." Mostly everyone else drifted off toward some hard-core partying. I sat up and talked with Todd until dawn, and we found that we both had Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, roots. My grandparents had lived close to where he was born and raised. We were also oddly similar - sober, work-driven, judgmental, idiosyncratic wallflowers.

Bobby continued to open up his world to me. Through him I had met Todd, the

"I sat on the floor as Kris Kristofferson sang 'Me and Bobby McGee' to Janis. I was there for these moments, but so young that I hardly recognized them."

lawn, Candy Darling and Jackie Curtis were not to be categorized so lightly. They were performance artists, actresses and comedienne. Wayne was witty, Candy was pretty and Holly had drama, but I put my money on Jackie Curtis. In my mind, she had the most potential. She would successfully manipulate a whole conversation just to deliver one of Bette Davis' killer lines. And she knew how to wear a house-dress. With all her makeup she was a Seventies version of a Thirties starlet. Glitter on her eyelids. Glitter in the hair. Glitter face powder.

I hated glitter, and sitting with Jackie meant going home speckled all over.

Right before the holidays Jackie seemed distraught. I ordered her a snowball, a coveted unaffordable treat. It was a mound of devil's food cake filled with vanilla ice cream and covered with shredded coconut. She sat there eating, plopping large glitter tears in the melting ice cream. Candy Darling slinked in next to her, dipping her lacquered fingernail into the dish, offering a bit of comfort with her soothing voice.

There was something especially poignant about Jackie and Candy as they embraced the imagined life of the actress. They both had aspects of Mildred Rogers, the coarse, illiterate waitress in *Of Human Bondage*. Candy had Kim Novak's looks

window and looked out at the snow falling beyond the fluorescent Oasis sign with its squiggly palm tree. "Look," he said, "it's snowing in the desert." I thought about a scene in Howard Hawks' movie *Scarface* where Paul Muni and his girl are looking out the window at a neon sign that said THE WORLD IS YOURS. Robert squeezed my hand.

The Sixties were coming to an end. Robert and I celebrated our birthdays. Robert turned 23. Then I turned 23.

The perfect prime number. Robert made me a tie rack with the image of the Virgin Mary. I gave him seven silver skulls on a length of leather.

He wore the skulls. I wore a tie. We felt ready for the Seventies.

"It's our decade," he said.

BOBBY NEUWIRTH RODE into town like some easy rider. He would dismount, and the artists, musicians and poets all came together, a gathering of the tribes. He was a catalyst for action. He would breeze in and take me places, exposing me to other artists and musicians. I was a colt, but he appreciated and encouraged my awkward attempts at writing songs. I wanted to do things that affirmed his belief in me. I developed long balladic oral poems inspired

artists Brice Marden and Larry Poons, and the musicians Billy Swan, Tom Paxton, Eric Andersen, Roger McGuinn and Kris Kristofferson. Like a flock of geese, they veered toward the Chelsea Hotel, awaiting the arrival of Janis Joplin. The only credential that gave me entrance to the private world of these people was Bobby's word, and his word was undisputable. He introduced me to Janis as "the Poet," and from then on that's what Janis always called me.

We all went to see Janis play in Central Park at the Wollman Rink. The concert was sold out, but great crowds were spread out over the surrounding rocks. I stood with Bobby on the side of the stage mesmerized by her electric energy. It suddenly began to pour, followed by thunder and lightning, and the stage was cleared. Unable to continue, the roadies began to break down the equipment. The people, refusing to leave, began to boo. Janis was distraught. "They're booing me, man," she cried to Bobby. Bobby brushed the hair out of her eyes. "They're not booing you, darling," he said. "They're booing the rain."

The intense community of musicians staying at the Chelsea then would often find their way into Janis' suite with their acoustic guitars. I was privy to the process as they worked [Cont. on 64]

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Reviews

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Soul divas in an Auto-Tune age: Mary J. and Alicia meet the future

Mary J. Blige



★★★★½

Stronger With Each Tear

Matriarch/Geffen

Alicia Keys ★★★★★



The Element of Freedom

MBK/J

BY ROB SHEFFIELD

IS THERE ROOM FOR GREAT soul singers in a post-vocal world? Over the past 10 years, pop voices have gotten thinner and tinnier with Auto-Tune and other production techniques. These days, even Mariah Carey wants to sound like Britney or Rihanna. So where does that leave Mary J. Blige and Alicia Keys, owners of the most distinctive and powerful lungs in the business? These New York soul divas have kept thinking big – by 2007, when you heard Blige's "Just Fine" or Keys' "No One" on the radio, they made the other singers around them sound like yapping Chihuahuas.

Both Keys and Blige have tested the waters with singles where their voices get heavily processed – Blige's "The One" and "Stronger," Keys' "Doesn't Mean Anything" – and it's no coincidence that these singles fell short of the Top 40. Mary J., the queen of hip-hop soul, going Auto-Tune? Isn't that like making the *Top Chef* cooks do a microwave-pizza challenge?

But Blige's experiment works in the context of her album. One of the reasons fans get so obsessive about Blige is that

she wrestles with self-doubt, pushing herself to prove she's good enough, long after her music settled that question for everyone else. So it makes sense for Blige to try on some new outfits – in the fantastic Stargate/Ne-Yo jam “I Feel Good,” she flashes the robot-voice ostinatos like a new pair of stilettos. When she sings, “Tipping in my heels with such swagger/Fellas, how are you?” she could be talking about the production. But she also goes for the misty blue-soul grit of “Kitchen” and the *Precious* theme, “I Can See in Color.” The queen sports a new look or two, but those aren't the only items in her wardrobe.

It's different for Keys, because unlike Blige, she's never made a drama out of self-doubt – her cocky assurance is part of her charisma. People loved “No One” because it sounded like nothing else out there at the time – a grown woman emoting with a grown voice, full of low-register warmth and depth. On *The Element of Freedom*, the production compresses her voice, making it sound a lot less like her, especially on the ballads. Even a great tune like the breakup blues of “Love Is Blind” can make you a little hungry to hear Alicia Keys sing it.

The superb Prince *homages*, “Try Sleeping With a Broken Heart” and “This Bed,” are experiments that pay off big, submerging Keys' pipes in unabashed 1980s synth cheese. She has less success with “Put It in a Love Song,” a Beyoncé-Swizz Beatz collabo that could have been called “Single Ladies 2: Put Another Ring on It.” The payback should have been “Distance and Time,” a gorgeous anthem that fuses Beyoncé's “Halo” with the Beatles' “Let It Be,” except Keys' voice gets quashed in the booth.

Only a stick-in-the-mud would blame these ladies for trying on the latest thing: What's truly noteworthy about these albums isn't their failed moments but the sizzle from the experiments that takes them somewhere new, seeing what the latest studio effects can do for their wonder-of-nature vocals.

Key Tracks: “I Feel Good,” “This Bed”

More Songs About Trust Funds and Food

Arty, preppy New York Afropoppers return with a killer second album

Vampire Weekend ★★★★★

Contra XL



ON THEIR 2008 DEBUT, VAMPIRE WEEKEND whipped up a new pop formula by fusing Paul Simon's *Graceland* with the touchstones of preppy ennui – Cape Cod summers, collegiate grief, crushes on girls with trust funds. The music had a bracing smartness, as overdetermined and detailed as a Wes Anderson movie, almost perfect for what it was, but you wondered how they'd handle the real world.

Just fine, it turns out. If *Vampire Weekend* was *Rushmore*, *Contra* is their *Royal Tenenbaums*: brainy, confident and generally awesome. Where much of the first album's charm was conceptual – Ivy League guys mashing up J.D. Salinger and King Sunny Adé – here the band has put on some muscle. The drums are bigger, the guitars are faster, and the songs are outfitted with synth beats and hip-hop, reggae and electro accents. “Diplomat's Son” sounds like a cross between classic rock steady and an M.I.A. mixtape; Ezra Koenig Auto-Tunes his voice over dancehall on “California English.” The band even takes a stab at arena rock on the synth “Giving Up the Gun.”

Koenig still comes across as a kid who brings his laundry home to Mom, but now he's kicking around midtown Manhattan (“White Sky”) and realizing that dating a rich girl isn't an excuse to be a dick (“Taxi Cab”). The album ends with the brutal, orchestral quiet of “I Think UR a Contra”: “You wanted good schools and friends with pools,” he tells an ex in a wounded boyish falsetto. “Well, I just wanted you.” It's powerful and disconcerting – and shows there's a lot more to Vampire Weekend than cleverness and bright colors. There's soul, too.

WILL DANA



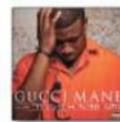
NEXT WEEKEND Chris Baio, Rostam Batmanglij, Christopher Tomson and Ezra Koenig (from left)

Gucci Mane

★★★★½

The State vs. Radric Davis
So Iced/Asylum/Warner Bros.

Alabama native dominates hip-hop from the state pen



“MY EGO GETTING too big, it's too heavy,” cries Gucci Mane, né Radric Davis. For the past year, the Alabama-bred, Atlanta-based rapper's Deep South drawl and wily, witty rhymes have been ubiquitous – even from prison, where he's currently doing time for probation violation. His second official album differentiates itself with excellent production, especially the rumbling beats of Bangladesh and Drumma Boy, and with guests such as Lil Wayne and Usher. But the star is Gucci, with his deep grab bag of rhymes that aim at funny bones (“AK hit your dog, and you can't bring Old Yeller back”). It's a winning combination: a heavy ego and a light touch. **JODY ROSEN**

Key Tracks: “Lemonade,” “Wasted,” “Kush Is My Cologne”

Timbaland ★★★★★

Shock Value II

Mosley/Blackground/Interscope

Tim plays impresario and mashes up the pop chart



TIMBALAND hoped to sign up Madonna, Beyoncé, T.I. and Jay-Z for this album – a *NOW That's What I Call Music* in his own image. Instead, he settled for Drake, Daughtry, Chad Kroeger, Miley Cyrus, his protégés One-Republic, his little brother Sebastian and BFFs like Justin Timberlake and Nelly Furtado. In his fantasy-league version of the Top 40, all pop genres blur into a woozy, futuristic disco. Timbo's genius has always been of the wizard-behind-the-curtain variety, and here his clunky croon dominates – whether he's overcooking a fast-food-as-sex metaphor with J.T. or running down his résumé to a soft-rock fanfare with Jet. **JON DOLAN**

Key Tracks: “Morning After Dark,” “Say Something”

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Real Estate

Real Estate *Woodst*

New Jersey dudes find a silvery sunbeam of inspiration in the mixture of surf rock and lush, ambient shoegaze: Think the Beach Boys' "Kokomo" meets a Yo La Tengo dronefest. Jangly, pastoral and lovely.

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

The Live Anthology

Reprise

A new box set captures the freewheeling power of the Heartbreakers live, once and for all. The covers are where you can really hear the band flex - check out Petty's takes on "Green Onions" and the Dead's "Friend of the Devil."

Kid Sister

Ultraviolet *Downtown*

Kanye West protégée splits the difference between hip-hop and club pop, sends Lady Gaga to remedial rhyme school ("Right Hand Hi") and riffs on Eighties Yazoo hits ("Big n Bad"). Torrid!

OK Go ★★ ★

Of the Blue Colour of the Sky *Capitol*

Former YouTube stars step off the treadmill



IT STILL TRAILS "Jizz in My Pants" for YouTube clicks, but OK

Go's 48-million-served "Here It Goes Again" made it hard to imagine the Chicago quartet beyond treadmill choreography and geek-boy casual wear. Colored by Flaming Lips producer Dave Fridmann and endorsed by *This American Life*'s Ira Glass, their latest aims to make their sounds measure up to the visuals. The single "WTF?" conjures vintage Prince, all breathless falsetto and bone-dry "Kiss" guitar; there are tweaked Sixties AM-radio melodies and flashes of quiet soul. But it's mostly a psychedelic, smarty-pants dance party; no gym machines necessary. **WILL HERMES**

Key Tracks: "WTF?" "This Too Shall Pass," "While You Were Asleep"

Surfer Blood

★★★ 1/2

Astro Coast *Kanine*

Florida Pixies, Pavement fans launch into awesome jams



FLORIDA'S SURFER Blood idealize Nineties alternative rock the way

Seventies punks idealized Fifties rock & roll: as a tangible past just distant enough for them to misremember in awesome new ways. Pavement noise scimmages, warped Pixies surf rock, fresh-faced Weezer tuneage, it's all the same mess to them. But they dress up their guitar-mad escapades in a stadium-echo kick that Nineties indie kids were too grumpy to try. "Swim" is the monster riff-geek odyssey, complete with an Afro-pop breakdown that turns into a gorgeous distortion convulsion; "Twin Peaks" nails the languid pique of classic Rivers Cuomo; every lyric seems to circle around the totally-Nineties theme of wasting away in Zimaville. **JON DOLAN**

Key Tracks: "Swim," "Twin Peaks"

Ke\$ha ★★ ★

Animal *Kemosabe/RCA*

Pimpadelic girl behind "TiK ToK" gets nasty for entire disc



NOT LONG AGO, frat-boy antics were for, well, boys. But 22-year-old Ke\$ha, the

electro-upstart behind the hit "TiK ToK," is here to let the world know that loutish drunkenness and sexual harassment aren't just for fellas anymore. On her debut, she calls herself a pimp, brags about a "Party at a Rich Dude's House" and tells one hapless love toy, "Don't be a little bitch with your chit-chat/Just show me where your dick's at." It's repulsive, obnoxious and ridiculously catchy - thanks to songwriter-producers Dr. Luke and Max Martin, who envelop Ke\$ha's bratty raps in percolating beats and buzzing bass lines. Fear for the future of civilization, and dance. **JODY ROSEN**

Key Tracks: "TiK ToK," "Your Love Is My Drug"

TOP SINGLES

Lil Wayne (feat. Eminem) ★★ ★

"Drop the World"

Cash Money/Universal (leaked)

After all the buzz about Lil Wayne's long-delayed rock album, *Rebirth*, it turns out the killer anthem is his version of David Bowie's "Space Oddity." Because of all his trials and tribulations, he vows, "Hop up in my spaceship and leave Earth, motherfucker/I'm gone." Ground Control to Major Weezy! The New Wave synths and slo-mo drum-machine stutter add to the strung-out vibe, although the rock guitar cranks up for the chorus. Eminem adds a verse of moral support, but it's Weezy's track all the way, as



Ground Control to Major Weezy!

the starman stares down at a hostile world with "hate in my heart/Love in my mind."

ROB SHEFFIELD

Spoon ★★ ★

"Written in Reverse"

myspace.com/spoon

"I'm writin' this to you in reverse/Someone better call a hearse!" begins Britt Daniel on the single off the upcoming *Transference*: an outburst of banging piano, phlegmy howls and hoarse falsetto that can't quite decide how hooky or serious it wants to be. Kinda like a lovers' brawl between Tom Waits and Fiona Apple.

WILL HERMES

Jeff Mangum ★★ ★ 1/2

"Sign the Dotted Line"

mergerecords.com/stroke

The rarest gem on the fine fundraiser *Stroke: Songs for Chris Knox*? This first song in a decade from Neutral Milk Hotel recluse Jeff Mangum - a Tall Dwarfs cover on which Mangum declares, "Let's go away" and "blend into the crowd" in his ageless, heart-wrenched bray over acoustic guitar. Cool, bro, but do come back, you're missed bad. **W.H.**

Beck (featuring Feist) ★★ ★

"Weighted Down"

beck.com

Beck's ever-changing covers band continues on its Skip Spence project with this slow-as-molasses song from the Moby Grape frontman's 1969 solo album, *Oar*. Beck adds light funk and makes the chorus a group singalong, but between the depressed lyrics and Feist's smoky murmur, Spence's pain shines through.

CHRISTIAN HOARD

Eminem ★★ ★ 1/2

"Hell Breaks Loose"

iTunes

Eminem has publicly disavowed the *Relapse* album. ("I was still working the drugs out of my system," he told one reporter.) But he's showing signs of life on this new track from *Relapse: Refill*, pouring a dizzying tongue-twister ("We're in the indigo Winnebago with tinted windows") over a slinky Dre beat. **J.R.**

Smashing Pumpkins ★★ ★ 1/2

"A Song for a Son"

smashingpumpkins.com

A completely great mini-epic full of nonsense lyrics ("This is a song for a space invader/Who flew into the sun/ Never to return") that builds over a stately piano intro to a wind-whipped, guitar-strafed climax. Proof that Billy Corgan remains a master of classic-rock form - a man who can sing, with no apology or embarrassment, "This is a song for a dove/ This is a song for a blown-out bird." **J.R.**

Portishead ★★ ★ 1/2

"Chase the Tear"

7digital.com

This Amnesty benefit sounds like Gary Numan on the Autobahn - until Beth Gibbons' parched coo floats over the electro rhythm like a ghost who won't be denied. A 10-note guitar solo, depth-charge beats, and as the groove begins to transport you, it stops dead. Haunting, which is the point. **W.H.**

FRICKE'S PICKS

By David Fricke

Detroit Rock City

Bob Seger's first official crawl through his vaults, *Early Seger Vol. 1 (Hideout)*, is both a blessing and frustration. The second bit first: The album has only 10 tracks, a seemingly random mix of out-of-print orphans and never-issued songs. And none of them are that early. Seger skips over his entire late-Sixties run, on 45 and LP, of Michigan-garage might and metallic psychedelia. Here's the blessing: Several early-Seventies nuggets – including the Chuck Berry-style blazer “Get Out of Denver,” Seger's burnt-road-dog growl in the Allman Brothers cover “Midnight Rider” and the brassy-up locomotion of “Long Song Comin’” (with new overdubs) – highlight Seger's funky-church and Detroit-muscle charge on wilderness-era records such as *Back in '72* (1973) and *Seven* (1974). As for the previously unreleased numbers, what was Seger thinking when he left the seductive rolling melancholy of “Days When the Rain Would Come” on the shelf back in 1985? At 35 minutes, *Early Seger* is over way too quick. It is not short on gems.

Boris on 45

You need a turntable to hear what **Boris**, the Tokyo superfuzz trio, mean by “heavy” and “hits” on *Japanese Heavy Rock Hits* (Southern Lord), a series of three seven-inch singles, each with its own subtitle. “8” is a side of high-speed savagery and one of guitar scuzz and bubblegum mantra. The industrial crunch across both halves of “H.M.A. – Heavy Metal Addict” will be solace to those mourning the live



MICHIGAN MAYHEM
A young Seger in the studio in 1970

retirement of Nine Inch Nails. “16:47:52” is simply schizo: a bare-strum ballad and a full wall of drone and vocal sigh. No hits then. But lots of heavy.

Velvet Folk Songs

On the third and fourth Velvet Underground albums, 1969's *The Velvet Underground* and 1970's *Loaded*, bassist **Doug Yule** was the gripping boyish voice in Lou Reed's dramas “Candy Says” and “New Age.” Yule now lives in Seattle and plays the fiddle (he builds them, too). But he still sings real-life songs in *RedDog*, a Seattle old-timey-folk trio with mandolinist Cary Lung and guitarist/banjo player Tom Collicott. Their fine debut, *Hard Times* (OldDog), is all public-domain tunes, antique blues and backwoods fables flecked with a purist's grit. Yule's voice has aged a bit, but the high yearning I know so well in “Oh! Sweet Nuthin’” is still there.

Clipse ★★½

Til the Casket Drops

Columbia

Coke rappers expand their territory on third album



HOW LONG CAN you rhyme about selling cocaine before it gets old?

Perhaps forever, judging from this Virginia duo's brilliant run of two lean, hard-hittin' albums (2002's *Lord Willin'* and 2006's *Hell Hath No Fury*) and three top-notch mixtapes. But on their third album, *Til the Casket Drops*, Pusha T. and Malice step back from head-snapping crack rap, turning out snazzier songs about playing golf and luxury-suite threesomes. The Neptunes are back as main producers, and the old brutally clever Clipse appear on “Never Will It Stop.” But songs like the fluffy synth jam “Champion” make it sound like they spent too much time at Pharrell's beach house. **CHRISTIAN HOARD**

Key Tracks: “Never Will It Stop,” “Popular Demand (Popeyes)”

Ringo Starr

★★★

Y Not Hip-O/UMe

Ringo makes high-spirited, forthright return



AT 69, BEATLES drummer Ringo Starr is as doggedly good-natured as ever.

His 16th studio album, *Y Not* – recorded with a cast of all-stars including Paul McCartney and Joss Stone – is full of straightforward, sweetly melodic tunes, most of them about Starr's abiding optimism, such as “Time.” The exception here is “The Other Side of Liverpool,” a dark rocker in which Starr opens up about his rocky childhood (“At the age of three, my father was gone”). Otherwise, warmth and whiffs of nostalgia rule the day, particularly on “Walk With You,” where McCartney harmonizes as Starr sings a prayer for serenity; it's one of Ringo's prettiest songs yet. **C.H.**

Key Tracks: “Walk With You,” “The Other Side of Liverpool”

Thirty Seconds to Mars ★★

This Is War Virgin/EMI

Jared Leto and band swing for the fences, with a howl



IN 1994, JARED Leto gave us a TV hunk for the ages: the mute and brooding Jordan

Catalano, from *My So-Called Life*. Unfortunately, Catalano wouldn't waste an “uhh...whatever” on the hammy, bombastic third disc from Leto's band, *Thirty Seconds to Mars* (with Leto's brother, Shannon, on drums). The signposts here are Pink Floyd, INXS and Nickelback. Leto bellows things like “Where is your God?” over and over as industrial atmospherics and choirs of fans (invited to studio “summits” by the band) hammer home a theme of fortitude in the face of societal trauma (or something). We can all feel as one in coming together to ignore his message of hope. **JON DOLAN**

Key Tracks: “This Is War,” “Hurricane”

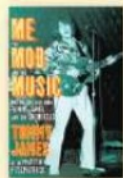
BOOKS

Me, the Mob and the Music

★★★★½

Tommy James with Martin Fitzpatrick

Scribner



Tommy James' rock & roll education cost him millions, but at least we got this entertaining memoir. James

was a blue-collar Midwestern teen in search of fame and fortune, and the guy who obliged him was infamous Roulette Records tough guy Morris Levy. What follows is a string of big Sixties hits, including “Mony Mony,” “Crimson and Clover” and “I Think We're Alone Now.” What doesn't follow is money: Levy, tied to the Genovese crime family, refused James anything more than handouts (“Give the kid ten grand!”). James paints a detailed – and even affectionate – portrait of the man dubbed “the godfather of rock & roll.” **FRED GOODMAN**

Phish: The Biography ★★

Parke Puterbaugh

Da Capo



In the mid-1990s, Parke Puterbaugh spent two years working on a massive feature about

Phish for *ROLLING STONE*. That reporting – plus a slew of new interviews – form the basis for this biography, which traces the band from its days at the University of Vermont through its recent reunion. Though he's clearly a fan (“Hardly anyone has bad things to say about Phish shows from 1993,” he writes), Puterbaugh is frank about how drug-addled and lazy Phish had become in the years leading up to their 2004 split. In one scene, Trey Anastasio listens to a recording of a half-assed show in Las Vegas, then tells his bandmates that they're breaking up. The real story: Phish rose to become one of the biggest bands in the country by following none of the usual rules of success. **ANDY GREENE**



Michael.

In words and pictures as only *Rolling Stone* could.

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BY PETER TRAVERS

BATTLE CRY
Sam Worthington
turns blue to
save the world.

King of the World

A classic? No. But James Cameron's 3-D epic is a sensory blast

Avatar ★★★★★
Sam Worthington, Zoë Saldana, Sigourney Weaver
Directed by James Cameron

OSCAR CAN RELAX. THE epic crowd-pleaser the Academy lusted for is here, the one to show that the geezer voters are hip to what the kids want (IMAX 3D) and what the industry needs (the kind of wowser you'll pay to see on a big screen). James Cameron's tone-deaf but thunderously exciting *Avatar*, costing a record \$300 million, is just the thing to pump box-office blood into Oscar's idiotically expanded Best Picture category (10 nominees instead of the usual five). Life-size indie stuff like *Precious* and *The Hurt Locker* looks puny next to the computerized giants at play in the fields of Lord Cameron.

Here's a filmmaker who knows how to harness technology to storytelling. Cameron has been cooking up the plot of *Avatar* since childhood. The basics? Humans are bad. It's 2154, and Earth is dying. To survive, we need a min-

eral called Unobtainium (a joke term popularized by engineers). To get it, we travel to the alien moon of Pandora and abuse its natives. They are the blue-skinned, yellow-eyed, 10-foot-tall Na'vi, who hug trees but hate on intrusive humans. The Na'vi are good, in similar ways to the indigenous people that America historically exploits. If you're not thinking Native Americans, Vietnamese and Iraqis, Cameron nudges you with allusions to *Dances With Wolves* and the genocide behind terms such as "fight terror with terror" and "shock and awe." Dialogue is not Cameron's strong suit.

From the man who turned *Titanic* into the fattest hit in history, there has to be a love story. And just as Jack fell for Rose, Jake (Sam Worthington), a crippled ex-Marine on the Pandora mission, loses his heart to Neytiri (Zoë Saldana), a Na'vi princess. How does that happen? Dr. Grace Augustine (great to see Sigourney Weaver of Cameron's iconic *Aliens*) and her scientific team have mixed human and Na'vi DNA to create avatars to infiltrate Pandora. Jake lies in a pod at the controls as his avatar leaps around like *Watchmen*'s Dr. Manhattan without flaunting the giant blue penis.

Props to Worthington and Saldana for igniting sparks, given that their scenes together are all digital (the actors wore sensors so the camera could capture their movements). How do Jake and Neytiri get it on like digital sex dolls? See the damn movie. The computerized Pandora overflows with beauty and terror (those banshees are a wonder) that dwarfs mundane villains, military (Stephen Lang) and corporate (Giovanni Ribisi), who bluster with predictable results. The final battle between the Na'vi and their human destroyers is a ground-breaking blend of digital and live action. OK, it's unnerving that a film preaching peace hits its visual peak with scenes of mass destruction. But *Avatar* is no Hollywood wankfest. It extends the possibilities of movies. Cameron's talent really is as big as his dreams.



TEEN ANGST
Michael Cera

Youth in Revolt ★★★★★

It's a bitch telling a coming-of-age story minus clichés and sappiness. So *Youth in Revolt*, with Michael Cera in his best performance yet, is a small miracle. Cera plays Nick Twisp, the teen hero of C.D. Payne's book. We meet Nick after a jerk-off session that should clear the multiplex of prudes. Nick's had it with his divorced mom (Jean Smart) and her new lover (Zach Galifianakis). Ditto his bimbo-banging dad (Steve Buscemi). Nick the virgin isn't getting any. Then he meets Sheeni Saunders (the beguiling Portia Doubleday), who shares his taste for art cinema. To nail Sheeni, Nick invents a mustached alter ego, Francois, who takes what he wants. Destruction ensues, also sex. Director Miguel Arteta (*Chuck & Buck*), working from a tight script by Gustin Nash, tinges the mirth with malice. Sweet.

It's Complicated

★★★½

Meryl Streep, Alec Baldwin, Steve Martin

Directed by Nancy Meyers

PEOPLE OVER 50 TALKING about sex and – yikes! – having it! Welcome to *It's Complicated*, a romcom that qualifies as a waking nightmare for teens and infantile men whose definition of “hot” hovers around jailbait. Screw them. In this unapologetic chick flick from writer-director Nancy Meyers – she profitably reinvented the genre with *What Women Want* and *Something's Gotta Give* – Meryl Streep plays a divorced mother of three grown children who winds up slutting around with the rat bastard (Alec Baldwin) who divorced her for a younger model (Lake Bell). Streep even has an amiable architect (Steve Martin) sniffing after her. Meyers panders to another popular fem fantasy: conspicuous consumption. Streep's Jane Adler runs a successful bakery in chichi Santa Barbara, and her home, from kitchen to bathroom, is drooled over by John Toll's camera. Streep is asked to giggle often, often for no good reason. But the actors are consistently expert. Martin makes his pot-smoking caper with Streep memorably hilarious. And Baldwin, the consummate scene-stealer (wait for his nude shot!), goes comic devilry one better by adding a touching human dimension. You don't have to feel guilty for lapping up this froth. Just don't expect nourishment.

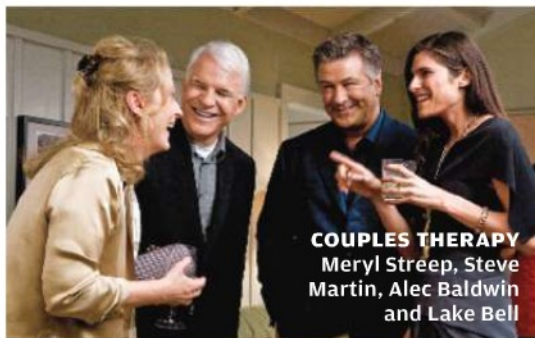
Sherlock Holmes

★★★

Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Rachel McAdams

Directed by Guy Ritchie

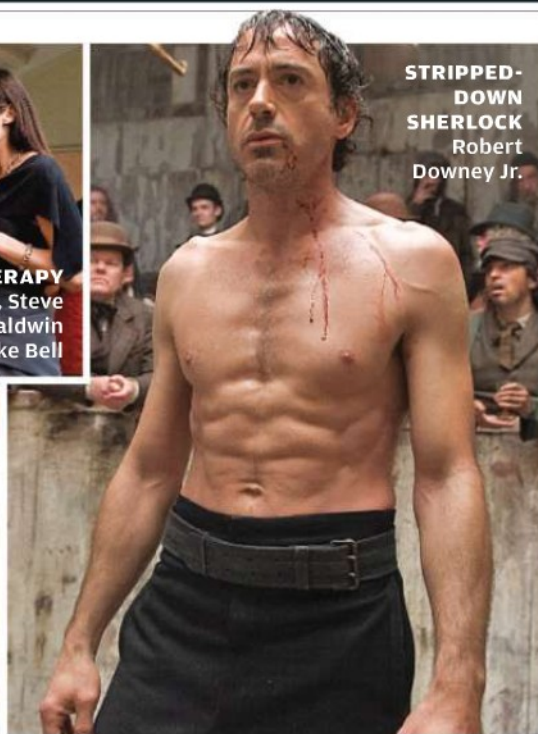
SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE never imagined his cerebral London detective as a ball-busting action hero. But director Guy Ritchie did. And he's persuaded Robert Downey Jr. to mainline testosterone. You never saw Basil Rathbone, the best movie Holmes, or Jeremy Brett, the best TV Holmes, strip down in a freestyle-fight ring. You do here. Even old Dr. Watson is a scrapper in the studly person of Jude Law. Ritchie



COUPLES THERAPY
Meryl Streep, Steve Martin, Alec Baldwin and Lake Bell



SWAN SONG
Heath Ledger



STRIPPED-DOWN SHERLOCK
Robert Downey Jr.

directs with the kind of *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* gusto that's meant to batter you into submission.

The time is 1891, and the place is still London, but Ritchie can't be bothered with period details, especially dialogue. Noticing that the villainous Lord Blackwood (Mark Strong) has scratched bloody messages all over his filthy pris-

on cell, Holmes quips, “Love what you've done with the place.” Holmes scholars will cry their eyes out over this update from hell. Rachel McAdams is mere window dressing as a mystery woman from Holmes' past. In place of romance, we get cheesy computer effects (that collapsing bridge – please). Ritchie is all about the whooshing and headbang-

ing, leaving no space between Holmes' words to savor their meaning. Downey is irresistible. The movie, not so much.

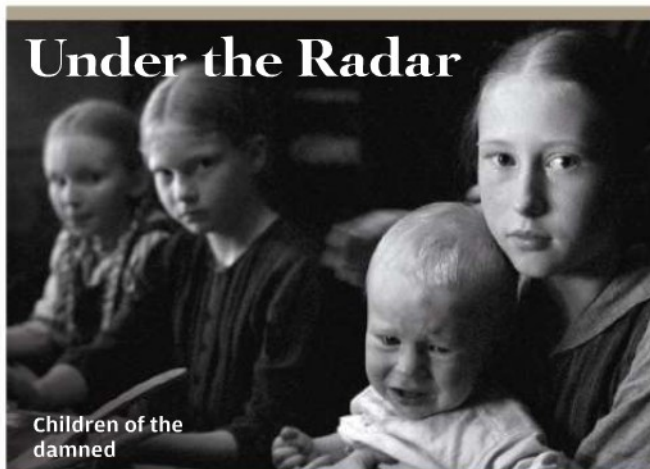
The Imaginarium of Dr. Parnassus

★★★

Heath Ledger

Directed by Terry Gilliam

HEATH LEDGER'S LAST screen performance, a remarkable one interrupted by his tragic death at age 28 in 2008, comes wrapped in the kind of passionate provocation of a movie that the Aussie actor favored. Terry Gilliam, the mad visionary behind *Brazil*, *Time Bandits* and Monty Python, was ready to scrap the film after the passing of Ledger, who had filmed only the London scenes. As the movie was conceived, Ledger's con man, Tony, would join the traveling horse-drawn caravan of Dr. Parnassus (a terrific Christopher Plummer) and lead customers behind a mirror to a parallel world of computer-generated fantasy. What saved the film was Gilliam's decision to call on three of Ledger's colleagues – Johnny Depp, Jude Law and Colin Farrell – to play Tony in the scenes behind the mirror. Despite a shaky framework, the magic works. It's a chance to see Ledger one last time in the act of doing what he loved. Take it.



Children of the damned

The White Ribbon ★★★½

Don't let anyone tell you too much about this spellbinder from Austrian writer-director Michael Haneke (*Caché*). Shot in stunning black-and-white by the gifted Christian Berger, *The White Ribbon* is a toxic blossom of images that burn into your memory. In pre-World War I Germany, a farm village is beset by accidents that may not be accidents. The Baron (Ulrich Tukur) dominates the village economy, just as the Pastor (Burghart Klaußner) holds brutal sway over the morality of the villagers and their families. It's on the faces of the children that Haneke tells his story of corruption and the grip of fascism. This haunting film never pushes itself on you. It trusts you to suss out the horror that lies beneath the veneer of innocence. You'll be knocked for a loop.

CLIMATE CRISIS

[Cont. from 34] to strip Americans of their freedom. "The government is going to monitor where you set your thermostat, how much plane travel you do," declared Marc Morano, a former Republican staffer on the Senate environment committee who now runs Climate Depot, a clearinghouse for disinformation about global warming. "It's a level of control we've never even contemplated in America."

Never mind that cap-and-trade would cut climate pollution by harnessing the power of the free market – the virtues of which Republicans have been preaching for decades. The climate bill and its market-based solution was now transformed into an instrument of government control and communist bureaucracy. "They are going to take our financial systems, and then they are going to nationalize industry, and then they are going to nationalize energy," Glenn Beck said. Those who support the measure, he added, "have exposed themselves quite honestly, I think, as treasonous."

The trouble was, people weren't buying such nonsense: Polls show that only one in three Americans believe that addressing global warming will hurt the economy, and three in four support some kind of climate legislation. To create the illusion that ordinary voters oppose action on global warming, Big Oil once again relied on outright deception. Last summer, the American Petroleum Institute – the lobbying arm of the oil and gas industry – coordinated a series of "Energy Citizen" rallies in 20 states to protest limits on carbon pollution. In an internal memo leaked in August, API urged its nearly 400 member companies, including oil giants like Shell and Exxon, to quietly pack the rallies with their own employees. "Please treat this information as sensitive," the memo warned. "We don't want critics to know our game plan."

Americans for Prosperity, which was busy organizing town-hall brawls over health care, also lent its support to the industry's campaign to kill climate legislation. AFP – co-founded and supported by David Koch, an executive of Koch Industries – conducted a "Hot Air Tour" of America in which its president, Tim Phillips, would appear with a hot-air balloon and warn whatever sparse crowds the group had been able to bus in about the threat of "global-warming alarmism." The climate bill, Phillips insisted, would lead to "lost jobs, higher taxes and less freedom."

In at least one case, however, such hot-headed and misleading rhetoric backfired. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which was working closely with energy companies to stop the climate bill, sparked an internal revolt when one of its vice presidents called for the science behind climate change to be put on trial – a public spectacle he predicted would represent "the Scopes monkey trial of the 21st century."

The statement was so idiotic that it inspired eight major companies, including energy giants Exelon and PG&E, to quit the Chamber. In his resignation letter, CEO Peter Darbee of PG&E denounced the Chamber for its "extreme position" on global warming and its "disingenuous attempts to distort the reality" of climate change.

WHILE BIG OIL AND BIG COAL worked to whip up public hysteria, their Republican allies moved to block the climate bill in the Senate. The most unexpected and influential voice proved to be John McCain, who had long been a champion of climate legislation. The Arizona senator was highly respected by environmental and business leaders for his grasp of both the science and economics of global warming. Even while he was busy selling his soul to the far right during the presidential campaign, he called climate change "a test of foresight, of political courage and of the unselfish concern that one generation owes to the next." But when the opportunity to show some political courage of his own arrived, McCain executed a bizarre about-face. The industry-friendly bill passed by the House, he now declared – a measure modeled on the cap-and-trade bill he had co-sponsored with Joe Lieberman – was "the worst example of legislation I've seen in a long time."

Senate veterans were stunned. "McCain is still licking his wounds from the election," says one insider who recently met with the senator. "He may eventually do something on this, but he wants Obama to come to him and ask for help."

The only Republican who has demonstrated any courage on climate change is McCain's old pal from South Carolina, Sen. Lindsey Graham. In October, Graham partnered with Sen. John Kerry to write an op-ed for *The New York Times*, calling for Republicans and Democrats to work together to pass climate legislation. It was a bold move for Graham – and it prompted an immediate backlash from his own party. Republicans in his home state formally censured him, and front groups for the oil industry paid for ads attacking Graham. In one ad, a narrator talks about how the economic recession has "pushed local businesses to the brink" and raised unemployment to 11.6 percent: "So why would Sen. Lindsey Graham support new energy taxes – called cap-and-trade – that will further harm our economy and kill millions of American jobs?"

As they had in the House, Republicans in the Senate decided to obstruct the climate bill at every turn. Leading the charge was Sen. James Inhofe, the former chair of the Senate environment committee, who has not let the fact that the Arctic is melting before our very eyes stop him from continuing to proclaim that global warming is a "hoax." When Boxer, the committee's new chair, tried to advance the cli-

mate bill, Inhofe launched a number of procedural maneuvers designed to stall the bill, such as calling for more analysis from the EPA. "We all knew it was a game," says one Senate staffer. When Boxer finally forced a vote on the bill in November, Inhofe and his fellow Republicans on the committee didn't even bother to show up.

Democrats from energy-producing states – including Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Jim Webb of Virginia and Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas – also tried to put the brakes on climate legislation, siding with Republicans who demanded that the bill earn a 60-vote supermajority for passage. By last fall, the Obama administration was forced to acknowledge that the battle was lost. "Obviously, we'd like to be through the process," Browner, the new climate czar, conceded in October. "But that's not going to happen. We will go to Copenhagen with whatever we have." Inhofe put it even more bluntly. "We won, you lost," he boasted to Boxer's face. "Get a life."

The Senate's failure to act helped torpedo the talks in Copenhagen, which not only failed to produce a binding treaty but postponed meaningful action until 2015. It has also left Obama with no clear strategy of how to move forward. "We're staring into the abyss," says Dan Dudek, chief economist for the Environmental Defense Fund. The best hope is that Democrats manage to pass a climate bill this spring, paving the way for an international treaty that will cut carbon pollution before rising sea levels engulf low-lying nations. "It's really about getting people to focus on fact and not fiction," says Sen. Kerry, who will play a key role in guiding legislation through the Senate. "As long as we can argue this on real science – not on phony numbers trumped up to scare people – I believe we can get to the place where people realize that curbing climate change will strengthen America's economy and enhance our security."

Maybe so. But the most disturbing achievement of the energy industry in the battle over global warming is its success in lowering our expectations. Climate activists like to talk about mobilizing all of America's resources, as we did during World War II, to fight global warming. But as the failure to pass the climate bill reveals, it may be easier to defeat a dictator like Hitler than to overcome internal threats to our future as powerful as Big Coal and Big Oil. Despite the near-certainty of a climate catastrophe, there are no crowds marching in the streets to demand action, no prime-time speech from President Obama. Even the most aggressive climate legislation the Senate might pass – something on par with the House bill – will still fall tragically short of what climate scientists tell us needs to be done to avoid the looming chaos and destruction. In that sense – the only one that ultimately matters – the battle over global warming may already be over. **PS**

DEVENDRA BANHART

[Cont. from 45] he orders Hawaiian pizza. "I don't normally eat meat, but Hawaiian pizza is so friendly, so peaceful," he says, sitting at his kitchen table in a crisp white shirt buttoned all the way up and one red sock, the other green ("I'm an accountant who really loves Mexico," he says, explaining the outfit). He's tired from two weeks of afternoon rehearsals with his band for their tour. "You know, our practices have been three days for a decade," he says. "We'd just have the first three shows be shit – I mean, I'm sure all of our shows will always be shit – but for the first time, we've dissected who does what in which part." He smiles. "It's such a beautiful feeling the first time you get it right, when everything is locked in and the harmony works, because you can't be anywhere else but there."

For this album he worked with an outside producer, Band of Bees' Paul Butler, but he second-guesses himself a lot, often because he doesn't want his music to be too easy to understand. These days, Banhart is trying to write down his ideas, to focus his thoughts. He brings out a small yellow lined notepad. "Our children's children will be astonished by our gas-related inhibitions," he reads, out loud. "See, I wrote that down because in the future, there might be a parking space and a farting space – machines where you go and fart, to make hundreds of hours of energy."

He flicks the pages, through a lot of notes about science: quantum physics, general relativity, the Large Hadron Collider. "I'm genuinely interested in science," he says. "I feel that I'm working in a realm that is moving toward the mystery, and science is trying to dissect the mystery." This is Banhart's "bifurcated path" – the idea that the ecstasy of music and the rationality of science are both valid ways of fathoming the universe, especially since they draw us ever closer to the conclusion that humans and the Earth are more intertwined than we thought possible. In fact, a week before Banhart began recording

What Will We Be, he found, oddly, that he couldn't open his mouth. "Couldn't eat a Brazil nut," he says. A doctor gave him muscle relaxants, but it didn't help. A friend recommended ayahuasca, the visionary vine of shamans that produces an eight-hour trip to unknown realms – and, suddenly, his mouth popped open. Two snakes, like the double helix of DNA, are a symbol of the animating spirit of ayahuasca, which is considered by some to contain the essence of life. The tattoos on his feet honor the experience. "But you must be very careful when talking about this, because it is essential to do ayahuasca with a shaman," explains Banhart. "You know, one of my realizations was, 'The baby doesn't realize it's a baby.' I kept saying that over and over."

That's as clear as he gets about his spiritual beliefs. "I'm really just excited about the banana aspect of God," he says, a smile playing on his lips. "They are perfectly wrapped up for me, I peel them open, and there's delicious fruit full of potassium. Then I throw it away, and it disappears back into the Earth. Wow."

It's quiet here tonight, with Banhart's roommate out on a date. (When asked what he considers romantic, he says, "Napoleon telling Josephine, 'I'll be home in two weeks. Don't bathe.'") But he still doesn't feel completely comfortable. Recently, he visited an old house with peeling paint and crooked windows, and he realized that this beautiful home, which he's been renting for just two months, is too fancy for him – particularly his bedroom, where he gazes out the plate-glass windows at an expanse of Los Angeles skyline. "I can finally afford to live in a nice house, but it's just not me," he says, stabbing a finger at some of the Seventies-chic fixtures. "Look at those lamps. They're from . . . Disasterville." He shudders. "I don't know – the best songs I wrote were in the squat." Until he moves out, though, he wants to switch bedrooms, to a tiny space off the kitchen. "That room is a cave, a hovel," he says. "That's where I want to be."



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PATTI SMITH

[Cont. from 53] on songs for her new album. Janis was the queen of the radiating wheel, sitting in her easy chair with a bottle of Southern Comfort, even in the afternoon. Michael Pollard was usually by her side. They were like adoring twins, both with the same speech patterns, punctuating each sentence with "man." I sat on the floor as Kris Kristofferson sang her "Me and Bobby McGee," Janis joining in the chorus. I was there for these moments, but so young and preoccupied with my own thoughts that I hardly recognized them as moments.

TOWARD THE MIDDLE OF July, I made my last payment on my first guitar. Held in layaway in a pawnshop on Eighth Avenue, it was a little Martin acoustic. It had a bluebird decal on its top, and a strap made of multicolored braid. I bought a Bob Dylan songbook and learned a few simple chords. At first

they didn't sound too bad, but the more I played, the worse it sounded. I didn't realize you had to tune a guitar. Then it occurred to me that whenever it got out of tune, I could find a musician and ask them if they wanted to play it. There were plenty of musicians at the Chelsea.

I had written "Fire of Unknown Origin" as a poem, but after I met Bobby, I turned it into my first song. I struggled to find some chords to accompany it on guitar, and sang it for Robert. *Death comes sweeping down the hallway in a lady's dress/Death comes riding up the highway in its Sunday best/Death comes I can't do nothing/Death goes there must be something that remains/A fire of unknown origin took my baby away.*

When Janis Joplin returned in August for her rain date in Central Park, she seemed extremely happy. She was looking forward to recording, and came into town resplendent in magenta, pink and purple feather boas. She wore them

everywhere. The concert was a great success, and afterward we all went to the Remington, an artists' bar near lower Broadway. The tables were crowded with her entourage: Michael Pollard, Sally Grossman (who was the girl in the red dress on the cover of *Bringing It All Back Home*), Brice Marden and the actress Tuesday Weld. The jukebox was playing Charley Pride. Janis spent most of the party with a good-looking guy she was attracted to, but just before closing time he ducked out with one of the prettier hangers-on. Janis was devastated. "This always happens to me, man. Just another night alone," she sobbed on Bobby's shoulder.

Bobby asked me to get her to the Chelsea and to keep an eye on her. I took Janis back to her room, and sat with her while she bemoaned her fate. Before I left, I told her that I'd made a little song for her, and sang it to her. *I was working real hard/To show the world what I could do/Oh, I guess I never dreamed/*

I'd have to/World spins some photographs/How I love to laugh when the crowd laughs/While love slips through/A theatre that is full/But oh, baby/When the crowd goes home/And I turn in and I realize I'm alone/I can't believe/I had to sacrifice you.

She said, "That's me, man. That's my song." As I was leaving, she looked in the mirror, adjusting her boas. "How do I look, man?"

"Like a pearl," I answered. "A pearl of a girl."

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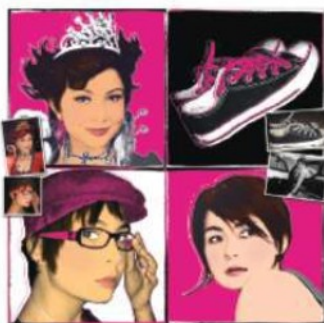
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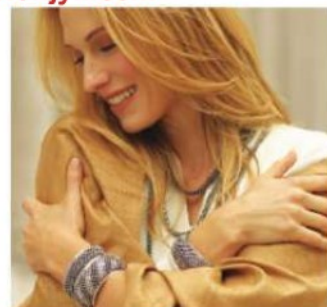
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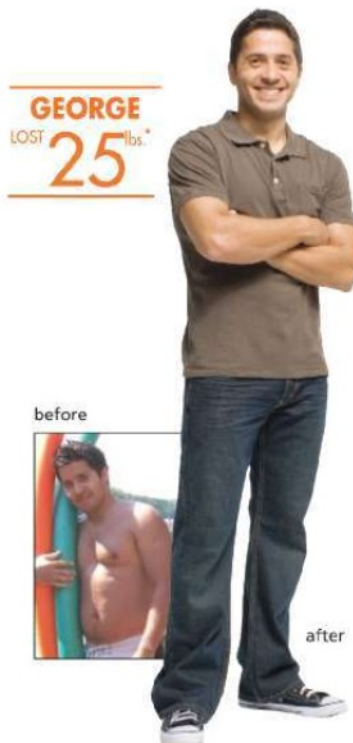


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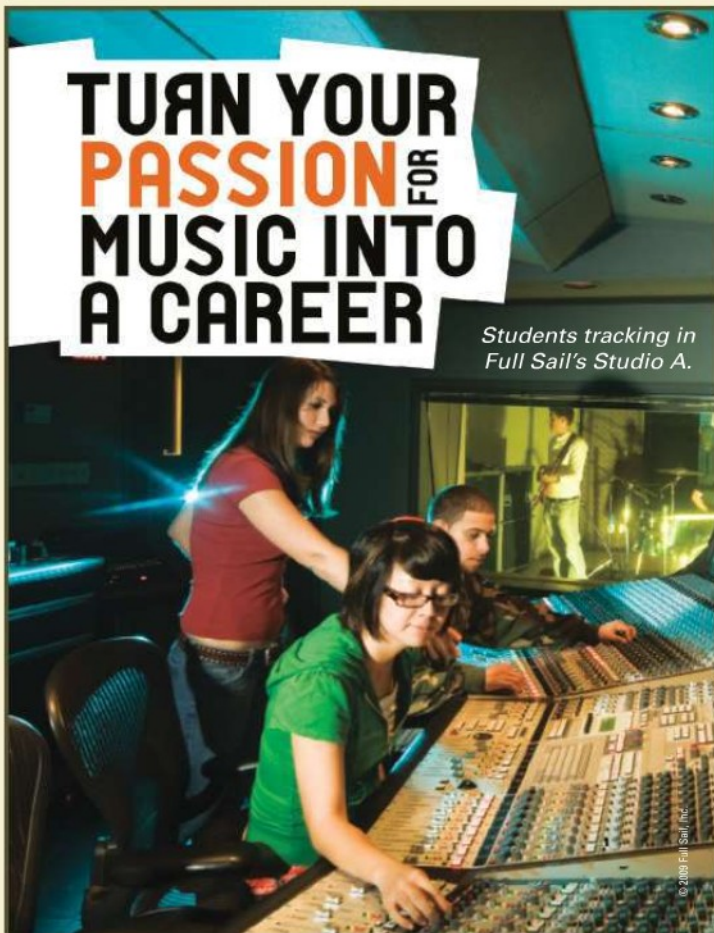
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CHARTS

iTunes TOP 10 SONGS

- Ke\$ha**
"TIK ToK" - Kemosabe/RCA
- Lady Gaga**
"Bad Romance" - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Jay-Z**
"Empire State of Mind" - Roc-A-Fella
- Iyaz**
"Replay" - Beluga Heights
- Owl City**
"Fireflies" - Universal Republic
- Ludacris**
"How Low" - Island/Def Jam
- Black Eyed Peas**
"Meet Me Halfway" - Will.i.am/Interscope
- David Guetta**
"Sexy Bitch" - Virgin
- Jason Derulo**
"Watcha Say" - Beluga Heights
- Britney Spears**
"3" - Jive

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COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- Animal Collective**
Fall Be Kind (EP) - Domino
- Tom Waits**
Glitter and Doom Live - Anti-
- Tegan and Sara**
Sainthood - Sire/Vapor/Warner Bros.
- Devendra Banhart**
What Will We Be - Warner Bros.
- Real Estate**
Real Estate - Woodsist
- The Flaming Lips**
Embryonic - Warner Bros.
- King Khan and BBQ Show**
Invisible Girl - In the Red
- BlakRoc**
BlakRoc - BlakRoc
- Them Crooked Vultures**
Them Crooked Vultures - DGC/Interscope
- Daptone Gold**
Various Artists - Daptone



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From the Vault

RS 50, January 21st, 1970

TOP 10 SINGLES

- B.J. Thomas**
"Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" - Scepter
- Shocking Blue**
"Venus" - Colossus
- The Jackson 5**
"I Want You Back" - Motown
- Diana Ross and the Supremes**
"Someday We'll Be Together" - Motown
- Led Zeppelin**
"Whole Lotta Love" - Atlantic
- Peter, Paul and Mary**
"Leaving on a Jet Plane" - Warner
- Elvis Presley**
"Don't Cry Daddy" - RCA Victor
- Tom Jones**
"Without Love (There Is Nothing)" - Parrot
- Tommy Roe**
"Jam Up Jelly Tight" - ABC
- Dionne Warwick**
"I'll Never Fall in Love Again" - Scepter



On the Cover

"In the long run, what happened at Altamont may help to eliminate festivals - which I think is one of the best things that can happen to rock & roll. Who gains other than people in the 50-foot perimeter of the stage? 290,000 others can't see or hear anything."

—Bill Graham

Top 40 Albums

- Susan Boyle**
I Dreamed a Dream - Syco/Columbia
- Andrea Bocelli**
My Christmas - Sugar
- Glee: The Music, Volume 2**
Soundtrack - 20th Century Fox TV/Columbia
- Taylor Swift**
Fearless - Big Machine
- Carrie Underwood**
Play On - 19/Arista Nashville
- Lady Gaga**
The Fame - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Chris Brown**
Graffiti - Jive
- Justin Bieber**
My World (EP) - Schoolboy/Raymond Braun/Island
- Michael Bublé**
Crazy Love - 143/Reprise
- Gucci Mane**
The State vs. Radric Davis - So Ivey/Asylum/Warner Bros.
- Glee: The Music, Volume 1**
Soundtrack - 20th Century Fox TV/Columbia
- Michael Jackson**
This Is It - MJJ/Epic
- NOW 32**
Various Artists - EMI/Universal/Zomba
- Lady Gaga**
The Fame Monster (EP) - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Norah Jones**
The Fall - Blue Note
- Josh Groban**
Noël - 143/Reprise
- Jimmy Buffett**
Buffet Hotel - Mailboat
- The Twilight Saga: New Moon**
Soundtrack - Summit/Chop Shop/Atlantic
- Thirty Seconds to Mars**
This Is War - Virgin/EMI
- Miley Cyrus**
The Time of Our Lives (EP) - Hollywood
- Black Eyed Peas**
The E.N.D. - Will.i.am/Interscope
- Casting Crowns**
Peace on Earth - Beach Street/Reunion
- Snoop Dogg**
Malice N Wonderland - Doggystyle/Priority
- Sting**
If on a Winter's Night... - Cherrytree/DG
- Lady Antebellum**
Lady Antebellum - Capitol Nashville
- John Mayer**
Battle Studies - Columbia
- Taylor Swift**
Sounds of the Season: The Taylor Swift Holiday Collection - NBC
- Rihanna**
Rated R - SRP/Def Jam
- Owl City**
Ocean Eyes - Universal Republic
- Adam Lambert**
For Your Entertainment - 19/RCA
- Casting Crowns**
Until the Whole World Hears - Beach Street/Reunion
- Tim McGraw**
Southern Voice - Curb
- Michael Jackson**
Number Ones - MJJ/Epic
- Sugarland**
Gold and Green - Mercury Nashville
- Trans-Siberian Orchestra**
Night Castle - Atlantic
- Timbaland**
Shock Value II - Mosley/Blackground/Interscope
- Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel**
Soundtrack - Fox
- Zac Brown Band**
The Foundation - Roar/Bigger Picture/Home Grown/Atlantic
- Mannheim Steamroller**
Christmas: 25th Anniversary Collection - American Gramophone
- R. Kelly**
Untitled - Jive



Susan Boyle on Fire

The 48-year-old U.K. contest show star's debut has sold 1.8 million copies in three weeks - one of the fastest-selling discs of the SoundScan era.



Brown's Bad Week

Brown accused stores of not stocking his album - his way of explaining why his opening-week sales were down by two-thirds from his last disc.



His So-Called Band

Emerging from a lawsuit with his label, former TV actor Jared Leto and his band sold a respectable 66,843 copies in their first week on shelves.



Sting's Winter Tale

An album of Bach and Schubert covers has turned out to be a shrewd commercial move for Sting: He's sold 369,816 copies in seven weeks.

00 Chart position on Dec. 16th, 2009
00 Chart position on Dec. 9th, 2009
NEW New Entry
2ND Re-Entry
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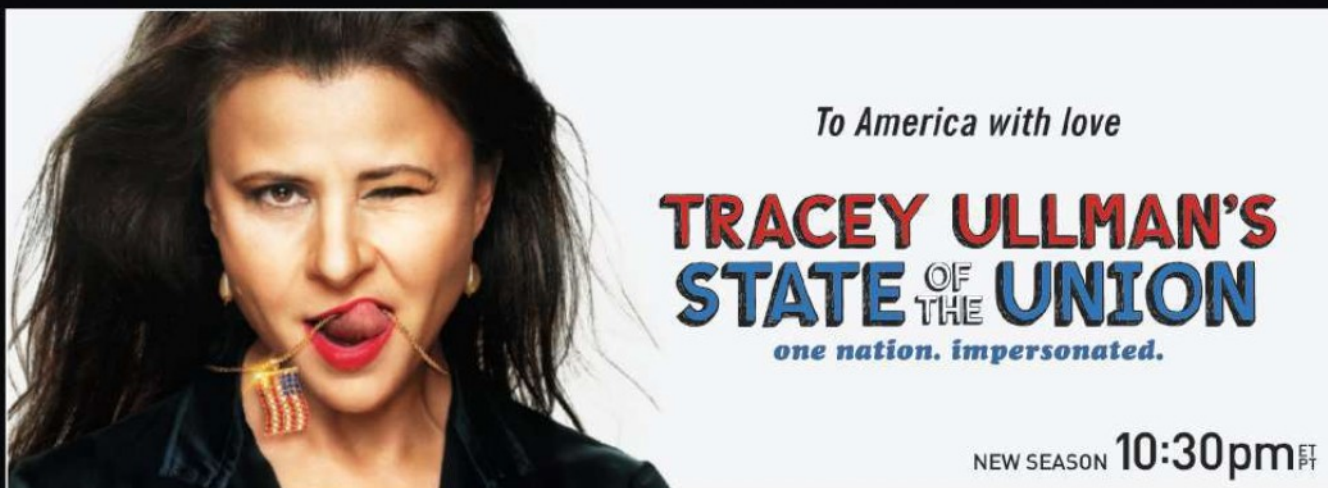
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